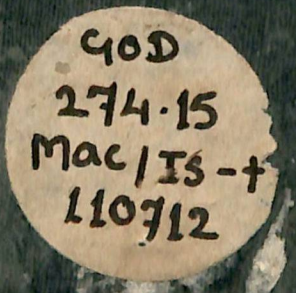
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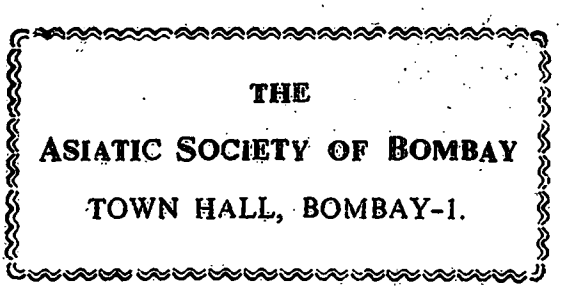

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THE DISESTABLISHMENT

OF

THE IRISH CHURCH.

IS THERE NOT A CAUSE?

A LETTER

TO

COLONEL GREVILLE-NUGENT, M.P.

ON THE

DISESTABLISHMENT OF THE IRISH CHURCH.

WITH A

VINDICATION OF MR. GLADSTONE'S CONSISTENCY.

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BY

THE REV. MALCOLM MacCOLL, M.A.

CHAPLAIN TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE LORD NAPIER, K.T. ETC.

B b 50

'To the timid I would presume to say: As the spirit of wisdom will not permit the wilful acceleration of a crisis, so, when the crisis has arrived, futile efforts at procrastination can only purchase a miserable momentary respite at an unbounded cost, and the path of safety lies only through a tempered and calculating boldness.'—*A Letter to the Right Reverend William Skinner, D.D., by the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, M.P. London*, 1852.

LONDON:

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.

1868.

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A LETTER, &c.

My dear Colonel Greville-Nugent,

"I know no one to whom I could more appropriately address this letter than to yourself. An Englishman by birth and education, you can bring to the consideration of the Irish Question a mind free from the mists of prejudice and passion. An Irish proprietor yourself, your sympathies would naturally be with that class of persons. An earnest member of the Church of England, you would not advocate a policy which you believed likely to prove injurious to that church. Having a large stake in the land both of England and Ireland, you have no motive to aim a blow at the rights of property; but, on the contrary, every inducement to fortify those rights with all legitimate safeguards. Accustomed to the maxims, and surrounded by the traditions of Protestant ascendancy, you have emancipated yourself from the cramping influence of such associations, and have applied your reason to the study of the ills and remedies of Ireland as a matter of duty, and a labour of love. Placed above all the temptations of party, you have no interests to serve but those of your country; and your

matured convictions in favour of justice to Ireland are not the birth of a crisis, but the result of much reading and meditation; and were formed, moreover, at a time when there did not seem much likelihood of your seeing them inscribed as a watchword on the banner of a victorious party. You have helped materially, in Parliament and out of Parliament, to bring the settlement of the Irish Question within sight of the goal; and your influence has been none the less effective because it has been unobtrusive. And I may add, as a personal reason for addressing you, that it was you who first excited in me a keen interest in the cause of Ireland; and some of the following observations are due, probably in a larger degree than I am aware of, to our conversations on the subject.

The question, then, of the Church Establishment in Ireland presents itself to my mind somewhat after this fashion. England took forcible possession of Ireland some seven centuries ago, and during the whole of that period Ireland may be described, without exaggeration, as in a state of unhappiness and chronic disaffection. A streak of light may, peradventure, here and there be seen flickering above the horizon of that long night; but these harbingers of deferred hopes are never seen to brighten into dawn.

How shall we account for this? How explain a phenomenon which has no parallel in the history of Europe—may I not say of the civilised world? The solution is clearly not to be found in any presumed abnormal idiosyncrasies of the Irish character, for the Irish, out of Ireland, are not deficient in the virtues

of which good citizens are made. Sir John Davys, Attorney-General for Ireland in the time of James I., and having anything but a friendly feeling for the Irish, has left on record the following testimony in their favour: 'There is no nation of people under the sun that doth love equal and indifferent justice better than the Irish, or will rest better satisfied with the execution thereof, although it be against themselves, so as they may have the benefit and protection of the law when upon just cause they do desire it.' I remember your telling me some years ago the impression made upon you when first you went to Ireland by this interesting feature in the character of the Irish people—this passionate love of justice, 'although it be against themselves,' which distinguishes them. Shall we say, in our perplexity and despair, as some have not hesitated to affirm, that there is some ineradicable antipathy of race which prevents the amalgamation of the Celt and the Saxon into one homogeneous nation? But such a view is contradicted by facts. For to say nothing of our colonies, and the United States of America, where this fusion of races is going on, and of France and other countries where it is an accomplished fact, our own country is a sufficient refutation of such an hypothesis. Putting the Irish out of the question, we are a composite nation of Celts and Danes, Saxons and Normans, welded into one harmonious and happy people. Indeed, it is probable that England and Ireland would ere now have been united as closely as England and Scotland are if the Reformation had not introduced a

new element of discord by adding to the antipathy of race the more powerful and more bitter antipathy of religion—the religion of a handful of English officials in Dublin, imposed upon the Irish nation by the sword of England. True, Ireland received anything but justice from England even before the Reformation. From Henry II. to Henry VIII. England treated Ireland as a conquered province, and thrust Englishmen into all the lucrative appointments in Church and State. Still, such was the fascination of that exuberant joyousness of temperament which characterises the sons and daughters of Erin, that the natives, like the Greeks of old, were gradually leading captive their captors. The English of the Pale were becoming proverbially 'more Irish than the Irish.' They learnt the language, adopted the costume, imbibed the manners, and got infected with the wit of the subject race to such a degree as even to excel in the manufacture of Irish bulls; as in the case, for example, of that wild nobleman, who pleaded, in extenuation of the crime of having burnt down the Cathedral of Cashel, the fact that he had hoped to have burnt the Archbishop within it.

But the Reformation put a stop to this process of amalgamation; and now, three centuries after the sword of Sussex began to cleave a passage for 'the light and glory of the Reformation in the midst of Ireland,' * we find a minister of the Crown describing that afflicted country as so profoundly disaffected towards the rule of England, that the union

* Mr. Gathorne Hardy's Speech on Mr. Gladstone's Resolutions.

of the two countries can only be maintained by a powerful army of occupation, and the suspension in Ireland, for an indefinite period, of the charter of British liberty.

Must this state of things last for ever? 'Is there no balm in Gilead?' no anodyne in all the treasury of British statesmanship that can 'pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,' and make a brave and generous nation like the Irish feel a pride, instead of humiliation, in having their destiny united with that of Old England? No, cries the Home Secretary. 'It is impossible to "minister to a mind diseased."' 'It is the mind of Ireland that is diseased; a disease caused by long traditions of hatred to the Saxon race, that have been kept alive by misrepresentation and by constant agitation. It is thus you have diseased the kindly and generous mind of Ireland, which would otherwise have been in harmony and peace with us.' Such is a statesman's view of the Irish Question, and it was cheered by the Conservative party. Ireland has no wrongs; she never had; 'she would have been in harmony and peace with us' ages ago if it had not been for a succession of pestilent agitators, of whom Mr. Gladstone is chief, who have been feeding her for seven centuries with the husks of obsolete traditions, and with such fell success that the 'mind of Ireland' is incurably 'diseased.' Like a victim of *delirium tremens*, she has been for centuries invoking deliverance from evils which are merely the fantastic creations of a disordered brain!

Certainly, if this be the true account of the matter, Ireland is indeed in a hopeless case. If the Irish are a nation of lunatics, it is obviously useless to deal with them as with rational beings; and a nation of lunatics they must be, to have allowed themselves to be persuaded by professional agitators that they have been suffering wrongfully for seven hundred years when, in truth, they have not been suffering at all. When a sensible and educated man, like Mr. Gathorne Hardy, gravely commits himself to such a paradox as this, and elicits the cheers of his party in support of it, we may well despair of ever seeing the Irish Question settled peaceably.

There is another consequence, and a very serious one, which inevitably results from Mr. Gathorne Hardy's theory of Irish grievances. A mental delusion which has lasted for so many centuries may reasonably be considered incurable; and this seems to be Mr. Hardy's opinion. It appears also to be the opinion of the large majority of the Peers who rejected the Suspensory Bill. Their spokesmen, lay and episcopal, admitted that the condition of Ireland was not satisfactory; they condemned Mr. Gladstone's policy; and they offered no policy of their own. It is impossible, they tell us, to conciliate the Roman Catholics of Ireland—that is, in plain language, the Irish nation. All that you can do is to redistribute the property of the Protestant minority in more equitable proportions within its own borders. Can they not see that the more they 'reform' the Irish Church in this sense, the more indefensible will be its

establishment? The more bishoprics they suppress, the more cathedral foundations they abrogate, the more parishes they amalgamate, the greater will be the anomaly of the Irish Church as an establishment. The real objection to it is not that it has too many bishops and deans for its population, though that may be true enough, but that its population being a miserable per centage of that of the country, it has no right to be considered a national church, and no claim to be established as the religion of Ireland. How will the 'reforms' suggested by the Commission, and echoed by Conservative candidates, affect this argument? By strengthening it immensely. 'We object to have the religion of a small minority established over us,' complained the Irish. 'Very well,' replied my Lord Derby; 'I will destroy ten bishoprics, and give their incomes to the remainder.' 'But, please your honour,' persist the complainants, 'we object to the remainder being established.' 'Go to,' rejoins his lordship, speaking on behalf of his party; 'then take four or five more bishops, as many deans as you like, and all such parsons as have not a tolerable congregation; but, of course, all the loot must be divided among the few that are left.' 'And as for you, the Roman Catholic majority,' adds Mr. Disraeli blandly; 'you, the people of Ireland, trust me I have a "truly liberal" policy for you. I wish to "create, not to destroy;" I intend to "level you up." In March that meant that I would endow a university for you, and also make some "alteration in the *status* of your priesthood." But the Liberals would not have

that, and the country backed up the Liberals, and I was in danger of losing my hard-won premiership ere I had time to warm the ministerial seat. But take courage, I will not desert you. I am obliged, indeed, to go to the country on the No-Popery ticket, for it is my only chance; but I am your friend still. I have still a "truly liberal" policy for you. I mean still to "level you up;" I mean still to "create and not to destroy;" but now the meaning of these phrases is that you may hope, upon my word you may, that my government will make some slight alteration in the position of Roman Catholic chaplains in gaols and workhouses. Moreover, if you will only give me time "to educate my party," I may possibly double on Mr. Gladstone in this matter as I did in the matter of Reform, and destroy the Irish Church much more effectually than he proposes to do. Only be patient, and you will find by and by that my process of Disestablishment will bear the same relation to Mr. Gladstone's that my Household Suffrage bore to his seven pounder.'

Behold the 'truly liberal policy' of a Conservative Government! Ireland is to be pacified by a sop to Roman Catholic chaplains in gaols and workhouses, and by reducing the area of the Protestant Establishment—in other words, by making the *irritamentum malorum* of Ireland more irritating still. It is not seriously maintained, even by its parent, that this grotesque abortion of statesmanship will satisfy Ireland. He and his friends calmly resign themselves to the prospect of maintaining the Union by an army

of occupation in Ireland and a periodical suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act.

This is a very serious conclusion to come to; because the question arises, By what right are we justified in perpetuating the yoke of our rule on Ireland against the wish of the Irish people, while we calmly confess that there is no hope of reconciling them to that rule? At the Bristol banquet last winter Lord Stanley made a memorable declaration, which was received with 'loud cheers,' and echoed through the kingdom. 'Those,' he said, 'who go in for a separate national existence, or repeal of the Union, which practically comes to the same thing, are asking for what they never can obtain; and it is only true kindness to tell them so in plain terms. . . . Ireland and England are inseparable for ever.' Just before the utterance of this emphatic declaration, Lord Stanley had confessed that 'it would be idle to deny that great discontent is very widely spread (in Ireland), that disaffection is not unfrequent, and that there is a portion of the population who regard their connection with England as a burden rather than as a benefit.'

Now I should like to know what right England has to endorse on the back of this ruinous confession Lord Stanley's declaration of indissoluble union with Ireland, if she admits with the Government of which Lord Stanley is so distinguished a member, that she has no other palliative for the discontent and disaffection, which he admits, than the 'truly liberal policy' of some petty change in the *status* of Roman Catholic chaplains in gaols and workhouses. That might be

very well, as Mr. Gladstone remarked at St. Helen's, 'if the great bulk of the Irish people were in gaols and workhouses.' I maintain that England has no right whatever to decree the union with Ireland 'inseparable for ever' unless she is prepared to grant the remedy which Ireland is willing to accept in lieu of separation. We see this clearly enough in the case of foreign countries. Venetia was ceded to Italy with the acclamation of England. The two Houses of Parliament in 1863 gave their moral support to Poland in the agony of its struggle to shake off the Muscovite yoke. England hailed with satisfaction the downfal of the Bourbon dynasty in Southern Italy, and would rejoice to see Rome become the capital of a united Italy. And even our abhorrence of Slavery did not prevent our upper and middle classes from sympathising with the gallant attempt of the Southern Confederacy to achieve 'a separate national existence.' And yet we feel surprised and indignant, and think our national honour outraged, if some foreign journalist or orator ventures to express sympathy with the wrongs of Ireland. I repeat, we have to show cause why the Union should be 'inseparable for ever;' and no cause can be shown so long as England persists in refusing what Ireland has been alternately praying and fighting for all these weary years. No country has the indefeasible right, which Lord Stanley contends for, of keeping another country tied to it for ever, and at the same time refusing the reasonable terms which the subject country offers to accept as the condition of the Union. The Protes-

tant Establishment, say the people of Ireland, has been, and is, the *fons et origo malorum* of our country. Abolish it, and Protestant and Catholic will soon learn to dwell together in unity and amity; and, instead of 'discontent' and 'disaffection,' you will have a loyal and contented people, proud to share with you the fortunes and fight the battles of a common empire.*

* It is sometimes said that the Irish Parliament consented to the Union, and therefore that the Irish nation has no grievance, inasmuch as the Fifth Article of the Treaty of Union sanctions the Protestant Establishment. But this is a fallacy: for, at the time of the Union, the Roman Catholics of Ireland were disfranchised, and had no voice in the legislation of the country. Blackstone lays it down as an axiom of the British constitution, that 'no subject of England can be constrained to pay any aids or taxes even for the defence of the realm or the support of the Government, but such as are imposed by his own consent, or that of his representative in Parliament.' But the English Government disfranchised the Roman Catholics of Ireland, and yet compelled them to contribute to the general taxation of the country, and to pay even more than their fair share; as for examples, among other insulting outrages, a bachelor's tax, specially aimed at the Roman Catholic clergy; and, as if this were not enough, they were forced, in addition, to pay tithes for the support of a church to which they did not belong, and which was associated in their minds with all their manifold wrongs.

But this argument, it is replied, would justify the Roman Catholics of Ireland in agitating for the repeal of the Union. Undoubtedly! But the great mass of the Irish Roman Catholics are willing to take the Union, 'for better for worse,' provided only one article of it is repealed—an article which would never have existed, if the Irish people had possessed those constitutional rights of which the English Government had arbitrarily, and in direct violation of the constitution, deprived them. It seems to me unreasonable to maintain, that the repeal of the Fifth Article of the Union would be unconstitutional, when, in truth, that Article was enacted in the very teeth of the constitution.

They must be strong reasons, indeed, which can resist such an appeal as this, and at the same time justify the proclamation, that 'Ireland and England are inseparable for ever.' Let us see what these reasons are; and let us begin with the one which has been put most prominently forward in the Lords' debate—the property argument. It formed the chief staple of Lord Derby's speech; and we may be sure that it would lose none of its cogency in the hands of so skilful a debater. If he has failed to make that argument good for the defence of the Irish Establishment, it may be safely assumed that it is not likely to fare better in the hands of any other champion. Let us, then, examine Lord Derby's salient points and see what they amount to.

Lord Derby maintains strongly that there is no difference at all in principle between private property and Church property, because 'in the case of every clergyman there is a personal representative by the corporation sole which that clergyman represents. The endowments of the Church were not conferred upon the individual clergyman for his own use and benefit. They were conferred upon the clergyman as a corporation sole, as a trustee, bound to hand down to his successor that property which he enjoyed *in consideration of the duties he performed.*' Now the words which I have italicised seem to me to be a complete answer to Lord Derby's argument. The Church, he argues, is a corporation, and certain endowments were 'conferred' on it, which it was to 'enjoy in consideration' of certain correlative 'duties.'

Does it not follow that if the duties, on the performance of which the enjoyment of the property depended, have been hopelessly neglected, or are found practically to be impossible of fulfilment, the right to the continued possession of the property has been forfeited? Now the primary duty which a church has to perform is the conversion of all who are within its reach, and, as a corollary of this, the promotion of peace and good will among the population over which it is established. But the Church of Ireland has declared, by the mouth of her clerical as well as lay defenders, that she has been a conspicuous failure as a missionary church; and it is accordingly proclaimed that she is a missionary church no longer. Her rights as an establishment seem to me, therefore, to go by default. And this, moreover, is the only ground on which Lord Derby can justify his own suppression of nearly half the Irish episcopate. Every diocese is a miniature church, and taking the corporation view of the Church, each bishop, 'as a corporation sole, as a trustee, was bound to hand down to his successor that property' which he had himself received from his predecessor. By what right, then, did Lord Derby suppress two archbishoprics and eight bishoprics, and appropriate their endowments to other purposes? In principle that was quite as complete an interference with the rights of private property as the change now proposed by Mr. Gladstone. To say that the rights of property were preserved because the endowments of the suppressed sees were redistributed within the area of the Irish Church is

much the same thing as it would be to say that the rights of property would be preserved, if Knowsley were thrown into chancery by act of Parliament, and its rental divided among the various members of the Stanley family. If I leave an endowment in perpetuity for the see of Kildare, what right has Lord Derby to seize hold of that endowment and employ it in building parsonages and augmenting livings in Dublin and elsewhere? What argument can justify such alienation which will not at the same time justify the disendowment of the Irish Church?

The particular illustrations of his argument which Lord Derby adduces do not appear to me to be very happy. He asks whether 'the great London Companies fulfil the purposes for which they were originally formed,' and answering his own question in the negative, he concludes that those who propose the disestablishment of the Irish Church are logically bound to 'take away' the property of the City companies, 'and devote it to other purposes.' And he instances the national gifts of Blenheim and Strathfield saye, and asks whether 'Parliament which granted may resume the gifts, and at its pleasure despoil those two noble dukes of their inheritance.'

The answer to this illustrative argument seems to me very obvious. The discrepancies between the present avocations of the London companies and 'the purposes for which they were originally formed' may be a matter of antiquarian interest, but it is not a grievance to any one: and it is the business of Parliament to redress specific grievances, not to rectify

historical anomalies. When Lord Derby can point out any danger to the state or any injury to a large class of Her Majesty's subjects accruing from the non-fulfilment of their original covenant by the City Companies, I have no doubt that he will find Parliament willing enough to hear him. Lord Derby would, I suppose, admit that the career of the East India Company was as illustrious and that its claims were as valid as those of any London Company. Yet Parliament did not scruple, for reasons of state policy, to supersede the East India Company, and vest its power and patronage in the minister of the day in London. Was that a crime against the rights of property? If so, Lord Derby was one of the principals in the act. The abolition, too, of the old East India Company was as vehemently opposed by those interested as the disestablishment of the Irish Church now is.

'Your petitioners' (said the Court of Directors in a long and able petition to the British Parliament) 'at their own cost, and by the agency of their own civil and military servants, originally acquired for this country its magnificent empire in the East. The foundations of this empire were laid by your petitioners, at that time neither aided nor controlled by Parliament, at the same period at which a succession of administrations under the control of Parliament were losing to the Crown of Great Britain another great empire on the other side of the Atlantic. During the period of about a century, which has since elapsed, the Indian possessions of this country have been governed and defended from the resources of those possessions without the smallest cost to the British exchequer, which, to the best of your petitioners' knowledge and belief, cannot be said of any other of the numerous foreign dependencies of the Crown.'

The East India Company could refer with pride to the record of its splendid achievements; but the advocate of the Irish Church must cover his face with shame when he is asked for evidence of any good that that establishment has ever accomplished.

The case of Blenheim and Strathfieldsaye are equally irrelevant. Let the Duke of Wellington, or the Duke of Marlborough, commit a felony, and Blenheim and Strathfieldsaye will be forfeited to their descendants, all rights of succession and inheritance notwithstanding. So that those properties do not belong unconditionally to their respective owners. They are theirs only so long as the possession of them involves no danger to the State; for the safety of the State supersedes all minor rights. Moreover, let there be a large class of Dukes of Wellington or Marlborough, endowed with exclusive privileges which are in conflict with the principles of natural justice and with the well-being of the State, and I, for one, would not give much for the security of their privileges in a country possessing an intelligent population and a free Parliament. The apophthegm of Mr. Drummond, that 'property has its duties as well as its rights,' was thought to strike at the roots of private property. But if the truth which it enunciated had been understood and acted on, the French Revolution would never have thrown its portentous shadow across the history of Modern Europe, teaching the owners of property, in a manner they ought not to forget, that the only real security for the rights of property is the faithful discharge of the

duties which the rights of property imply. What are all the royal exiles who are scattered over Europe but so many living warnings against the delusion of supposing that the rights of property, divorced from its duties, will save it in the day of trial? Lord Derby speaks rapturously of 'William the Deliverer.' What right had 'William the Deliverer' to the Crown of England? Had Parliament any more right to bestow that Crown upon him than it now has to bestow the coronet and the estate of Wellington on some other aspirant? Is not the only difference this, that James II. was held to have abused his rights, and therefore to have forfeited them, whereas no such charge is made against the proprietors of Blenheim and of Strathfieldsaye?

The indictment against the Irish Church is, that its foundations were laid in a gigantic wrong; that it has persistently neglected all the ends for which any Church was ever established; that instead of preaching a Gospel of peace to Ireland, it has made that unhappy country a theatre for the cultivation and exhibition of the worst passions of our nature; and that after three centuries of trial, with all the might of England at its back, it is as far to-day from having any legitimate claim to be called the Church of Ireland as it was in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. And it is the disestablishment of this institution, the presence of which in the midst of us Napoleon declared to be equal, in the event of an invasion, to a hostile army of 40,000 men, that Lord Derby places on the same footing as the confiscation, without rhyme or

reason, of Blenheim and Strathfieldsaye, or the estates of the London Companies!

It is indeed a wonder to me that a man of Lord Derby's acuteness and experience in debate should not have seen the utter inconsequence of a great deal of the reasoning on which he so confidently relies. For instance, he mentions 'one benefice in the diocese of Meath, which has gone through all the changes that Ireland has passed through—which has gone to the Independent Church of Ireland in the first place; then to the Papal Church, which was imposed upon it by the unjustifiable act of England; and, lastly, has been transferred to the Established Church of the country.' Now surely the inevitable conclusion is that, with respect to this benefice at least, Parliament has an undoubted right to interfere—a right established, on Lord Derby's own showing, by precedents extending over seven centuries. But this is not the conclusion which Lord Derby extracts from his premisses. 'Parliament,' he tells us, 'had certainly nothing to do with that benefice.' Pray, then, who 'transferred' the benefice? Undoubtedly, the English Government, acting through the Crown or through Parliament. So that Lord Derby's argument is really this: There is a certain benefice in Ireland which the English Government has frequently 'transferred;' therefore the English Government 'has certainly nothing to do with that benefice,' and can never touch it again without the most flagitious infringement of the rights of private property! If any other man than Lord Derby made use of such an argument

in a great debate, what should we think of his reasoning powers?

'It is notorious, moreover,' proceeds Lord Deroy, 'that six-sevenths of the glebe lands were conferred from confiscated estates by the legal grants of Protestant sovereigns, and it would not be difficult to show that the immense preponderance of the property now held by the Church in Ireland has been granted since the Reformation.'

Well, the conclusion that I should draw from such a state of things would be that the English Government has always asserted its right of making 'legal grants' of Irish property, whether ecclesiastical or lay. 'It is notorious,' says Lord Derby, 'that six-sevenths of the glebe lands were conferred from confiscated estates by the legal grants of Protestant sovereigns.' But why were the estates 'confiscated?' In many cases for no better reason than that their owners were Roman Catholics. Let us take a palmary instance to which Lord Cairns has referred with peculiar complacency—the Plantation of Ulster. 'The Irish Church,' he says, 'derives more than 100,000*l.*' from the glebe lands conferred on her by that act. He quotes from Hallam an account of the manner in which the land of Ulster was apportioned among the new settlers, and then he tells us, on the authority of Sir John Davys, that Ulster, 'which immediately before was one waste and desolate wilderness, became the garden of Ireland.' But why did not the Lord Chancellor consider it worth his while to explain the causes which had made Ulster 'one waste and desolate

wilderness ?' It is necessary to supply the omission. Spenser, in his 'State of Ireland,' gives an account of an expedition made into the territory beyond the Pale by the English soldiers. They *found* the country richly cultivated, and they *left* it 'a desolate wilderness.' In one comparatively small district alone the invaders destroyed corn to the value of 10,000*l.*; and this was done with the avowed intention of producing a famine. The crops were entirely destroyed throughout the length and breadth of Ulster and Munster; and in order to make the certainty of a famine more complete, such of the population as had escaped the sword were prevented during the ensuing spring from cultivating and sowing their fields. 'On entering O'Kane's country,' says one of the actors in these savage barbarities, 'we found it large and full of houses and corn ; we divided ourselves, and set a compass about, so as at night we met together, and encamped in the midst of the country, each troop having fired the houses and corn they met withal, which I never saw in more abundance.'* 'It is a saying worthy of the ferocious pride of Attila, that the grass never grew on the spot where his horse had trod.'† That inhuman boast would be equally appropriate in the mouths of some of the ruthless satraps whom England sent to kindle and maintain 'the light and glory of the Reformation in the midst of Ireland.'

When James I. succeeded Elizabeth on the throne of England, Ireland had one of those transitory gleams

* *Ireland and her Churches.* By James Godkin : p. 88.

† Gibbon's *Decline and Fall,* vol. iv. p. 242.

of promise which, like the mirage in the desert, have at rare intervals revived, but only to mock, her hopes.

James held out the olive branch. He proclaimed a general amnesty, promised the Roman Catholics toleration of their faith *if they practised its rites in private*, and offered to restore some forfeited lands and titles, provided the owners surrendered their title-deeds to the Crown, in order to have them renewed. But the Irish people soon found that all these fair promises were mere snares. A royal proclamation was published, which revived the intolerant statutes of Elizabeth, forbidding even the private celebration of the Roman Catholic religion by severe penalties, and making nonconformity with the Protestant establishment an offence punishable by fine and imprisonment. The 'royal Solomon' congratulated Chichester, his savage deputy, on his promptness in executing these Draconic laws, and expressed his 'hope that many, *by such means*, would be brought to conformity in religion, who hereafter will give thanks to God for being drawn by *so gentle a constraint* to their own good.' Some persons may think that James was using irony in describing fine and imprisonment as 'gentle constraints' in preaching the Protestant Gospel to the Irish; but James did not mean to be ironical. There is a terrible truth in the euphuism of his language; for undoubtedly fine and imprisonment *were* 'gentle constraints' compared with some of the other means by which 'the light and glory of the Reformation' were maintained in Ireland: that light was too often reflected from the glare of

burning homesteads; that glory was too frequently proclaimed by the groans of murdered men and the cries of outraged maidens.

The King's proclamation not only commanded all Roman Catholics to repair to Protestant places of worship; it actually proscribed all Roman Catholic ecclesiastics; forbad parents to send their children abroad for education; ordered all Roman Catholic schools in Ireland to be closed; and inhibited all Roman Catholics, without exception, from employing any private tutors or governesses other than those licensed by a Protestant clergyman or magistrate. And in order to stimulate the zeal of the subordinate agents in this persecution, churchwardens were ordered to make a monthly return of all who absented themselves from the Protestant services, receiving by way of reward 40*s.* out of the estate of each recusant. And in the execution of these cruel laws the Protestant bishops generally outdid the ferocity of the civil servants of the Crown.

In the meantime those who had surrendered the title-deeds of their properties in reliance on the faith of an English Protestant King found it in all cases difficult, in most cases impossible, to recover their possessions. Nor did those who had refused the insidious invitation fare better. The Irish Attorney-General already referred to, Sir John Davys, 'suggested the plan of finding titles for the Crown through the instrumentality of suborned agents, to whom commissions were granted to inquire for all wards, marriages without license from the Crown, conceal-

ments, forfeitures, and the like; so that no man, high or low, of the Irish, no matter how old his title might be, could claim estate in his lands till it pleased the deputy and his chief adviser to acknowledge it. Davys himself, in a letter to Cecil, has given us a lively picture of the knaves who were employed to do this work, with the deputy's commission in their hands. "They retire," says he, "into some corner of the counties, and in some obscure village execute their commission; and there, *having a suborned jury, find one man's land concealed, another man's lease forfeited for non-payment of rent, and another man's land holden of the King in capite. This being done, they never return their commissions; but send for the parties and compound with them, and make a booty upon the country.*" '*

In this villanous manner a great deal of the land of Ireland was wrested from its rightful owners, and bestowed on English and Scotch adventurers, who found Protestantism, in addition to its other merits, a very paying religion. But the most scandalous iniquity of all was that episode in Irish history in which Lord Derby and Lord Cairns glory—the Plantation of Ulster. The tragic story of that transaction is one of the darkest pages in the annals of England. The Earls of Tyrconnel and Tyrone were among the first to surrender their title-deeds, and each received back a patent drawn up with such ingenious ambiguity that their properties and rights lay at the mercy of

* *The Fate and Fortunes of the Earls of Tyrone and Tyrconnel*, p. 54.

the English Crown, and could on the most frivolous pretexts be alienated. They contrived for some time to escape the pitfalls which surrounded them; but finding at last that their liberty, perhaps their lives, were in jeopardy, Tyrone pensively observed that 'it was idle to struggle any longer against the stream,' and both Tyrconnel and himself escaped to the Continent.

This was precisely what the English Government wanted. The flight of the Earls, so cleverly brought about by the machinations of the officials in Dublin, was eagerly construed into an admission of guilt, and a parliament was convoked to sit in Dublin for the purpose of passing a bill of attainder against Tyrone and Tyrconnel. 'In all preceding Parliaments only thirty boroughs returned representatives; but in this forty-seven new boroughs, created for the occasion, were to have members.* Each and all of these

* 'A number of new boroughs, most of them inconsiderable, and many of them too poor to afford wages to their representatives, must entirely be influenced by Government, and must return its creatures and immediate dependents. Such an accession of power could not fail to encourage the administration to act without reserve, and pursue the dictates of its passions and resentments.' *Leland*, ii. p. 442.

'The deputy continued to increase the number of new boroughs to forty, of which several were not incorporated until the writs for summoning a Parliament had already been issued.' *Ibid.* p. 445.

The Roman Catholic peers petitioned the King against these scandalous proceedings, but without success. 'A fearful suspicion,' they say, 'that the project of erecting so many corporations in places that can scantily pass the rank of the poorest villages in the poorest country in Christendom, do tend to nought else at this time but that, by the voices of a few selected for the purpose under the name of burgesses, extreme penal laws should be imposed upon your subjects here.'

boroughs were poor, mean, and contemptible—some of them consisting of a few mud cabins, hastily got up by the "settlers," and without a single claim to representation. Nevertheless each was to return two members, elected, in the North especially, by Protestants, who had a particular interest in sweeping out the native Irish. . . . Nearly every one of the newly-created boroughs was represented by two individuals of no character, no property, and no principle. Many of them were officials in the pay of the Government, and all of them would willingly vote for any measure that contemplated the extermination of the "barbarous Irish," and the extinction of their "idolatrous worship." Never, indeed, at any former period did Ireland witness such profligate contempt of justice as this Parliament was destined to exhibit; for many of its members were Englishmen, having no residence in Ireland; judges who returned themselves; and, if we may credit Lord Mountmorris, even felons, whose flagitious crimes excluded them from the benefit of the law. To add to the gross injustice of all this, we may not omit to mention that no writs were issued to sundry boroughs "which were known to be opposed to the tyrannical proceedings of the Government."'

'In fact, nothing that the executive could do to effect their main object was left undone; and although money was scant at the time, Chichester's agents expended large sums in the most shameless bribery. Corruption was the order of the day, and no price was deemed too great to secure a Government majority. As for the House of Lords, it was composed of fifty

members, of whom one-half consisted of bishops of the alien Church.'*

Of these latter, Montgomery, Bishop of Derry, Clogher, and Raphoe, gives the following reason for the establishment of Protestant Episcopacy in Ireland:—

'The establishment of bishoprics will be a great strength in the higher House of Parliament for enacting statutes for the general reformation of Ireland in religion, which otherwise than by these means will hardly be yielded in that house, the whole nobility in that kingdom, some few excepted, being all professed Catholics.'

Of course a parliament thus composed and created was ready to do anything at the bidding of the Lord Deputy; and accordingly all the lands of Tyrconnel and Tyrone, and those of their adherents, were confiscated, and the country was systematically ravaged, and the population slaughtered by hundreds, in order to make room for Scotch and English settlers. 'If the number of the Scotch and English who are to come to Ireland do not much exceed that of the natives,' writes Sir John Davys, the unscrupulous Attorney-General, 'this last settlement of Ulster will be as unsuccessful as the previous ones,' because 'the natives will quickly overgrow the settlers, as weeds overgrow good corn.' Sir Arthur Chichester reported that he found Ulster 'abounding with houses, corn, cattle, and a people who had been bred up in arms, and flushed with former victories.' 'He left the country

* *The Fate and Fortunes of the Earls of Tyrone and Tyrconnel,* pp. 376–378.

desolate and waste, and the people upon it enjoying nothing but as fugitives, and what they obtained by stealth.' Again: 'I have often said and written, it is famine that must consume the Irish, as our swords and other endeavours work not that speedy effect which is expected. Hunger would be a better, because a speedier weapon to employ against them than the sword.' Once more: 'I burned all along the Lough (Neagh) within four miles of Dungannon, and killed one hundred people, sparing none, of what quality, age, or sex soever, besides many burned to death: we killed man, woman, and child—horse, beast, and whatsoever we could find.' Lord Mountjoy had been equally zealous in a previous expedition in Ulster. He had been successful, he reported, 'by the grace of God, as near as he could, in utterly wasting the country of Tyrone.'

This barbarous policy succeeded but too well. Pestilence and famine committed frightful havoc among those who had escaped the sword; and starving children were to be seen feeding in the silent streets on the corpses of their parents, while nuns, crying for mercy, were outraged in the very sanctuaries of their faith. This was the way in which 'the land of Ulster,' to quote again the Lord Chancellor's language, became 'one waste and desolate wilderness.' And with a knowledge of these facts, Lord Cairns thinks it fair and candid to vilify the Roman Catholic population by contrasting the desolation which the cruelty of England had wrought among them with the prosperous condition of the

pampered adventurers who were fattening on the property of the despoiled natives. I must not omit to mention, that when the Deputy returned to Dublin from his butcheries, his hands reeking with innocent blood, the Protestant Archbishop Jones at the head of his clergy went out to meet and to congratulate him.

These atrocities—and they are but random specimens from a long catalogue of similar crimes—stand, I believe, almost, if not quite, unparalleled in the history of the civilised world. We must seek their counterpart in the annals of barbarous tribes; and in saying this, I am merely quoting the opinion of Lord Clare, the Irish Lord Chancellor at the time of the Union. After showing that 'the whole land of Ireland had been confiscated with the exception of the estates of five or six persons, and that no inconsiderable portion of the island had been confiscated twice, or perhaps thrice, in the course of a century,' he goes on to make the following remarkable declaration:—

'The situation, therefore, of the Irish nation at the Revolution stands unparalleled in the history of the inhabited world. If the wars of England, carried on here from the reign of Elizabeth, had been waged against a foreign enemy, the inhabitants would have retained their possessions under the established law of civilised nations;' but the policy of England was 'a declaration of perpetual war against the natives of Ireland, and it has rendered her a blank amidst the nations of Europe, and retarded her progress in the civilised world.'

Yes; the circumstances attending the Plantation of Ulster, to which Lord Derby and Lord Cairns

refer as if they were quoting a proud page in the history of the Irish Establishment, find no parallel except in the career of such men as Attila 'the Scourge of God,' and Zingis Khan the Tartar.

'After the Moguls had subdued the northern provinces of China (says Gibbon), it was seriously proposed, not in the hour of victory and passion, but in calm, deliberate council, to exterminate all the inhabitants of that populous country, that the vacant land might be converted to the pasture of cattle. The firmness of a Chinese mandarin, who insinuated some principles of rational policy into the mind of Zingis, diverted him from the execution of this horrid design.' *

The 'horrid design' which the Tartar conqueror was prevented from perpetrating by the humane interposition of a Chinese mandarin was accomplished in Ireland by Christian conquerors, deriving their authority from a Christian king, and receiving the sanction and benediction of Christian bishops, who had the words of the Bible often on their lips while reading its precepts backward. 'When thou shalt besiege a city a long time,' says Moses in the series of instructions which he delivered to the Israelites before they crossed the Jordan, 'in making war against it to take it, thou shalt not destroy the trees thereof by forcing an ax against them . . . and thou shalt not cut them down (for the tree of the field is man's life) to employ them in the siege: only the trees which thou knowest that they be not trees for meat thou shalt destroy and cut them down' (Deut. xx. 19). What a commentary on this merciful

* *Decline and Fall*, vol. iv. p. 201.

legislation is the policy of devastating the corn-fields of Ireland, and preventing the famishing inhabitants from cultivating their fields the following spring—a policy, be it remembered, which was not only sanctioned, but urged, by the highest dignitaries of the Irish Establishment, who canted about Gospel truth while practising the detestable principles of Machiavelli! 'When a country is conquered,' says that political teacher, 'which differs from that of the conqueror in language, in customs, and in laws, great good fortune and great diligence are required to retain possession of it;' and even then it can only be done in one of two ways: by maintaining a large army of occupation; or, which is 'a better remedy,' by 'planting colonies in one or two places, to form, as it were, the keys of that country.' And these colonies need not embarrass the Prince very much, since 'he only offends those who have had their lands and houses taken from them and given to the new settlers, who form a very small part of the population; while those who have been wronged, remaining dispersed and impoverished, are no longer dangerous.' 'It is to be observed,' adds the wily diplomatist, 'that men must either be conciliated or deprived of the power of doing mischief (*o vezzeggiare o spegnere*), since they are likely to avenge light injuries, but great ones they cannot.'* I do not know what Lord Derby and Lord Cairns think of the political philosophy of Machiavelli; but in the plantation of Ulster, and indeed in our whole policy towards Ireland, the

* *Il Principe*, c. iii.

immoral principles of Machiavelli's 'Prince' are exhibited in action, and without the extenuating circumstances which the history of Machiavelli's age and country supplies in his case.

Now my point is this:—Lord Derby and Lord Cairns have not a word to say against the settlement of Ulster, with its attendant cruelties and wrongs. If they had said, 'No doubt the rights of property were scandalously set at nought by the Settlement of Ulster; but we cannot go back to that now; we cannot examine into the title-deeds of property which has been held for upwards of two centuries, on the ground that the original grant of it infringed the rights of property'—such an argument would be intelligible. But, on the contrary, Lord Derby and the Lord Chancellor are of opinion that the confiscation of Ulster and the extermination of its multitudes of inhabitants were justifiable acts of policy, and even praiseworthy; that is to say, they think it quite right as a matter of justice, and quite in harmony with the rights of property, that a whole province should be summarily confiscated and divided among a number of adventurers from Scotland and England; and they consider the 'legal grants' then made of those 'confiscated estates' so sacred that no question of policy can ever again disturb them without involving the sin of sacrilege, and the crime of spoliation. Upon the whole, the argument appears to me to come to this—that it is quite competent for Parliament to disregard the rights of property for the sake of any object of which Lord Derby and Lord

Cairns may happen to approve, but quite wrong to touch the rights of property, no matter how imperative the occasion, on behalf of any policy which does not commend itself to the favour of the two noble Lords.

But perhaps the most extraordinary portions of the speeches of Lord Derby and Lord Cairns are the replies which they respectively make to the argument founded on the loyalty of Scotland since England gave up the attempt to force the English Church on that nation. This is Lord Derby's version of the disestablishment of Episcopacy in Scotland:—

'I have heard it said, "How wisely William III. acted with regard to Scotland! Why, did he not act in the same manner with regard to Ireland?" I answer that William III. was not an idiot. He was a very shrewd, and very sagacious, and a very far-seeing sovereign; and I cannot help thinking that in respect of the different phases of Protestantism he acted much more from political than from religious considerations. He found that in Scotland the Presbyterians were the steady opponents of the fallen family, while the Episcopalians were the supporters of that family. Consequently he did not interfere with the religion of the Presbyterians, who were favourable to himself.'

The Lord Chancellor's account of the matter is even more enigmatical:—

'I think the case has no analogy whatever to the present. In Scotland there was an Established Church. That Church had endowments. No person proposed to disestablish that Church; no person proposed to take away its endowments. But the question, the only question, agitated between England and Scotland in the reign of William III. was this—

Whether the Parliament and whether the Government of England should coerce the Established Church of Scotland to receive a form of Church Government to which it conscientiously objected.'

Mr. Stuart Mill has characterised the Tory party as 'the stupid party in the State.' I do not agree with Mr. Mill; but Lord Derby and Lord Cairns seem to be of his opinion, or they would not have ventured to address to that party an argument of which anybody above the calibre of an incurable dunce could have exposed the absurdity. William III. found Episcopacy established in Scotland, and he found, at the same time, that the clergy of the Established Church had scruples about transferring to himself the allegiance which they had sworn to James II. Accordingly, 'William the Deliverer,' not being 'an idiot,' as Lord Derby assures us, disestablished the Church which he found established in Scotland. He also disendowed it of every farthing in its possession, and placed the Presbyterians, who were then in the condition of Dissenters, in immediate possession of the endowments and dignities of the Established Church. No pretence was made of saving vested interests. The clergy of the Episcopal Establishment had no respite allowed them. They were turned out of their benefices with every circumstance of indignity, and, in many cases, of barbarity, and were left with their families to beg or starve; and that, too, in the middle of an inclement winter. In fact, the disestablishment of Episcopacy in Scotland is popu-

larly known under the significant title of 'the rabbling of the clergy.' *

And it is on this state of facts that Lord Cairns makes the astounding assertion:—'In Scotland there was an Established Church. That Church had endowments. No person proposed to disestablish that Church; no person proposed to take away its endowments.' Then, pray, 'What meaneth this bleating of the sheep in mine ears?' What mean the cries of distress which the Established Church set up against her spoilers, when she found herself out upon the moor, and, like the wayfarer in the parable, stripped of her raiment and left 'half-dead?'

'The only question was, whether the Government of England should coerce the Established Church of Scotland to receive a form of Church Government to which it conscientiously objected.' In other words, the ecclesiastical establishment which William III. found in Scotland remained precisely as it was, with this single difference, that it dismissed its bishops into private life! Verily, the Lord Chancellor must have studied the ecclesiastical history of Scotland at the feet of his erudite relative, 'the good and great' Dr. M'Neile.

* 'This extrusion was accomplished with every circumstance of contumely and rudeness. They were wont to drag each unpopular divine to the churchyard, or to some public place in the village, and there expose him to the people as a condemned malefactor; commanding him, under pain of death, not to preach again in that parish, but to remove instantly with his household to some other quarter. The scene was usually concluded by tearing his gown over his head, which they rent into a hundred pieces, and sometimes by burning the Prayer-book.' Russell's *History of the Church in Scotland*, ii. p. 348.

We are clearly indebted to the recondite lore of that learned canonist for the interesting historical discovery with which Lord Cairns has favoured the public. But since it happens to be in the teeth of all that has hitherto been written on the subject, it would be interesting to know the data on which it is founded. No doubt the new Dean of Ripon will devote his great talents and learned leisure to the elucidation of the subject.

'It was only a question of church government.' As if that were a mere trifle! By a parity of reasoning Cromwell never disestablished the Church of England, for that, too, 'was a question of church government.'

Lord Derby's version of the matter is a singularly naive specimen of what theologians call *disciplina arcani*. 'William the Deliverer found that in Scotland the Presbyterians were the steady opponents of the fallen family, while the Episcopalians were the supporters of that family. Consequently *he did not interfere with the religion of the Presbyterians*.' Observe the velvety phraseology, the ingenuity of delicate periphrasis, with which my Lords Derby and Cairns describe the transference of Church property and State privilege from the Episcopalians to the Presbyterians of Scotland under the auspices of 'William the Deliverer;' and contrast it with the holy fervour with which they take up their parable against the wickedness of Mr. Gladstone in proposing to touch with his sacrilegious finger the temporal *status* of the ecclesiastical establishment in Ireland. How lightly they

regard the rights of property when they stand opposed to any cherished theory of their own! With what portentous sanctity they invest them when they can be pressed into the service of that theory, or enlisted in aid of a party triumph! 'William did not interfere with the religion of the Presbyterians.' If the English Government were to drive all the clergy of the Irish Establishment from their parishes, and give every portion of their endowments as well as their state privileges to the Roman Catholics, would Lord Derby consider it an adequate description of such a transaction to say simply that the English Government 'did not interfere with the religion of the Roman Catholics?' One of the evils of a Disraeli regime is the immorality which it has introduced in the use of the English language. That tongue used to be considered an open, straightforward organ of thought; but in the hands and on the lips of Mr. Disraeli and some of his friends it has become a supple instrument of intellectual legerdemain. He seems to be of Talleyrand's cynical opinion, that 'language was given to man to conceal his thoughts,' and has so accustomed us to the ease with which he can explain away the most solemn assurances, that we are apt to forget the immorality of the act in the dexterity of the operation.

For my own part, I confess I am not sorry that Episcopacy was disestablished in Scotland, for it was impossible that it could have made its way to the respect and affections of the people through the series of hateful circumstances with which the Stuart kings,

and especially the Government of Charles II., had contrived to surround it. At the same time, it must in candour be admitted, that at the period of the Revolution of 1688 the Episcopalians of Scotland were, from whatever cause, a clear majority of the whole nation.

'It must be observed, that when Presbytery was established in Scotland at the time of the Revolution, after the reign of the Episcopacy for twenty-nine years, *more than two-thirds of the people of the country, and most of the gentry were Episcopals,* the restoration of Presbytery by King William being chiefly owing to the Duke of Argyll, Marchmount, Stair, and other leading nobles, who suffered under Charles and James, and who had promoted the Revolution with all their interest and power.'*

* *Autobiography of the Rev. Dr. Alexander Carlyle,* p. 249. Edited by John Hill Burton. 'Assuming that the indulgence granted by James II. afforded entire liberty to all who were dissatisfied with the (Episcopal) Establishment to have separate places of worship, certain Episcopal authors have maintained that the people at large were not hostile either to their ministers, or to the ecclesiastical government under which they were placed. Following up this view, they assert that, prior to the Revolution, there were not in the whole country beyond the river Tay more than three or four Presbyterian meeting-houses, but that all the inhabitants, of whatever rank or degree, attended willingly the services of the parochial clergymen. Not less than half of Scotland lies northward of the estuary just named, in which it is admitted, even by Presbyterian writers, that the people were generally in favour of the Episcopal form. As for other parts of the country, in some shires there were not above two meeting-houses; in others none at all. . . The statements, which were made with great confidence by the rejected churchmen, derive some countenance from the fact, nowhere denied, that, in all the universities of Scotland, there were only four individuals among the professors, heads of houses, and principals, who were inclined to

This was written by a well-informed Presbyterian minister who was born within a few years of the event of which he writes, who mixed much in the society of political and literary men, and whose memoirs have had the advantage of the careful revision of one of the most learned historians of Scotland. Besides, Dr. Carlyle, as a distinguished member of the communion which supplanted the Episcopal Establishment, was not likely to have any prejudices in favour of 'black prelacy,' and his admission is therefore not liable to any suspicion of exaggeration. The state of the case seems to be something of this sort. There was a small but very active minority fanatically opposed to Episcopacy. A larger number were Episcopalians on principle, and were ready to sacrifice worldly advantages in defence of their principles. But the majority even of the adherents of the Episcopal Establishment had no enthusiasm for their creed, and were not likely, therefore, to stand the

Presbytery. Accordingly, when the visitation of these seats of learning took place, it was found necessary to expel every regent, master, and teacher, save one, as being devoted to the principles of the older communion. . . If, then, the sentiments of the people could be gathered from those of the better informed classes of society, it must be doubtful whether the accounts transmitted to William, respecting the "inclinations" of the Scotch, were founded in fact. It has never been called in question, that the greater part of the nobility and gentry were disposed towards Episcopacy; that the universities were decidedly in favour of the same polity; that the College of Justice, one of the most influential corporations in the North, had taken up arms in support of the Episcopal ministers; and that of the clergy themselves, a vast majority were averse to the change accomplished by the Revolution.' Russell's *History of the Church in Scotland*, ii. pp. 359–361.

test of persecution. This certainly was not a strong ground for an establishment to occupy; but it was infinitely stronger than the position of the Irish Establishment. Yet here is the preamble of the Act of 1869 for the Abolition of Prelacy in Scotland:—

'Whereas the estates of this kingdom in their claim of right declared that Prelacy is and hath been a great and insupportable grievance to the nation, and contrary to the inclinations of the people, &c.; the King and Queen's Majesties do declare that they will settle that Church government which is most agreeable to the inclinations of the people.'

This Act made a hole in the armour of Church and State reasoners through which missiles much larger than Mr. Gladstone's Suspensory Bill can easily enter. It destroyed, in fact, the only logical basis on which any reasonable theory of Church and State connection could be maintained; and the Maynooth Grant followed by and by, as if to stultify the argument in regard to Ireland. The English Government having thus determined 'the inclinations of the people,' and not the duty of supporting the true religion, to be the rule of its policy in Scotland, I do not see how it can refuse the application of that rule to Ireland.

The Marquis of Salisbury, in his brilliant speech on the Suspensory Bill, denied peremptorily that the property of the Irish Church was national property, and asked,

'Where is the title of its being national property? Will you find it in any deed, in any charter, in any statute book, or in any treatises of law? No; you will not find it in any of these things.' It has simply been evolved from the innermost depths of the Liberal consciousness. There is not the

slightest vestige of external proof in favour of the claim on the part of the nation to dispose of this property.'

This is a legal argument, and therefore a lawyer's opinion on the point must carry weight. Now I find that Mr. Coleridge, one of the most distinguished lawyers of the day, met Lord Salisbury's objection by anticipation in the House of Commons on the evening of April 3:—

'With the doctrine, the discipline, the worship, the inner life, the divine character of the Church (he said), Parliament has no claim to intermeddle. These things were not created by Parliament, and Parliament cannot alter or destroy them. But with the social condition, with the political surroundings, with the temporal accidents of the Church, with all that goes to make up the complicated idea expressed in the word "establishment," the State has just as clear and full a right to deal, as it has to deal with any other great institution of the country,—not more nor less, but just the same. However this statement may be questioned elsewhere, I think it cannot be questioned by any English lawyer, nor disputed in the English Parliament, and for this reason: Those who are familiar with our statute-book know that it opens with Magna Charta, but that the first real statutes and acts that were passed date from the very early years of Edward III. From that time a long succession of Statutes of Mortmain, read in their literal acceptation, forbid in terms the creation of any religious endowment whatever. Without doubt there were feudal and political reasons for that interference with the rights of property. Equally, without doubt, those statutes were from time to time evaded, and were re-enacted in stronger, more elaborate, and more stringent terms. But the result was that those statutes were notice to every one that the State claimed to have religious endowments peculiarly in its own hands, and to deal with it

far more peremptorily than it did with any other kind of property. Any man, therefore, who gives his property, as it is said, to religion, gives it with the full knowledge and in the reasonable expectation that the State will deal with it, if it find it to be prejudicial or inconvenient to its interests.'

That is the law of the case as expounded by an able and experienced lawyer in the House of Commons, and I am not aware that it was disputed by any lawyer, or indeed by any one, in the House. It has, moreover, the high sanction of Bishop Butler, of whom his great namesake, the lamented Mr. Archer Butler, has said, that he who has been introduced to his works for the first time must acknowledge it 'an epoch in his intellectual life.' Bishop Butler denies in express terms that property can be gifted away in perpetuity either to the Church or to individuals. 'Property in general,' he says, 'is, and must be, regulated by the laws of the community.' He does not wish to carry his correspondent, a lady who had scruples about retaining Church property, 'into abstruse speculations;' but he thinks 'it might be clearly shown that no one can have a right of perpetuity in any lands, except it be given by God, as the land of Canaan was to Abraham.* There is no other means by which such a kind of perpetuity or right can be acquired; and plain absurdities would follow from the

* Even this case is scarcely an exception to Bishop Butler's general principle; for the grant of the land of Canaan to Abraham and his seed was not unconditional, but with the reservation of its forfeiture on the bad behaviour of the Israelites; and, in matter of fact, the forfeiture was put in force on several occasions, and, on their rejection of Christianity, finally.

supposition of it. The persons, then, who gave these lands to the Church had themselves no perpetuity in them, consequently could convey no such right to the Church.'

This, be it remembered, is not the language of an advocate who was endeavouring to make out a case in favour of a foregone conclusion; it is the decision, with no view to publication, of a divine who was consulted in the matter as a case of conscience—a divine too, who, if ever man did, weighed carefully the value of every word he used, and pondered the laws of human society, and the problems of human existence with a conscientiousness and profound thoughtfulness never surpassed and seldom equalled.

Mr. Gladstone too, who is supposed, by those who take all their political knowledge from the ephemeral effusions of party newspapers, to have turned his back on all the principles which he once professed, expressed himself years ago in the sense of the above passage from Bishop Butler, and that in the very book which has been flung at his head so repeatedly during the last few months.

'Great confusion' (he said), 'over and above all other evils, infallibly arises, when things that have received their determinate form only from positive institution are attempted to be dealt with as matter of natural and inalienable right. Such is the case with the right of property. . . . . Let us admit that certain real rights must have arisen out of the original grant by the Creator of the earth and the things appertaining to it. Yet still those rights only receive their determinate form from civil law, which divides among individuals that which was given to the race, and draws the lines

of demarcation which prevent the right of one man from growing into the wrong of another. Undoubtedly the grant to mankind at large implied the necessity of such subsidiary regulations, and therefore, when considered in general, they are under Divine sanction; but the details of the arrangement are most clearly referable, when considered singly, only to human law as the efficient cause of their existence. How, therefore, can any natural and inalienable right be pleaded to a particular form of that which only receives its definite palpable existence from positive institution? How can any such right be termed property, when all property is essentially determinate and precise, and when such a right is essentially indeterminate and vague? How can a right of *property*, strictly so called, be pleaded against the power from which alone it derives its existence? There may, indeed, be moral or constitutional obligations, which ought to restrain the legislature in its dealings with property. These, however, are objections, relevant not to the competency of the agent, but to that of the propriety of the act. (The State) is, according to the idea of government, competent to entertain every question which has relation to the interests of the nation as such, and to apply and define its own agency thereupon.'*

Even Lord Derby himself, who is now so severe a censor of inconsistency in others, in one of the debates on the Temporalities Bill in 1833, dismissed the property argument contemptuously, by simply asserting that what was called Church property was, in reality, the property of the nation.†

Indeed it seems to me, apart altogether from statutes and Acts of Parliament, and independently of any

* *The State in its Relations with the Church*, 4th edit., pp. 119–120, 225.

† *Hansard*, vol. xvii. pp. 983, 985.

corroborative sanctions, that Mr. Coleridge's view of the matter rests on reason and common sense. For, not to dwell on the fact that the State all over the world has repeatedly claimed and exercised the right of controlling and disposing of ecclesiastical endowments, I do not see how it can be otherwise. Such a right inheres naturally in the very idea of a State, and follows from its definition as a necessary inference. It belongs to the essence of the State that it should possess supreme and unlimited power over all its component members in respect both to their persons and properties; and the State itself is the sole judge how far it is just to exercise its undoubted right.* Moreover, in a free country, the State is, in idea, incapable of acting wrongfully towards its members, because the governing power is supposed to represent the collective wisdom of the nation; and hence it is an axiom of the English Constitution that the State, in the person of its supreme governor, can

* 'One of the first motives to civil society,' says Mr. Burke, 'and which becomes one of its fundamental rules, is *that no man should be judge in his own cause.* By this, each person has at once divested himself of the first fundamental right of uncovenanted man, that is, to judge for himself, and to assert his own cause. He abdicates all rights to be his own governor; he inclusively, in a great measure, abandons the right of self-defence, the first law of nature. Man cannot enjoy the rights of an uncivil and of a civil state together. That he may obtain justice, he gives up his right of determining what it is in points the most essential to him. That he may secure some liberty, he makes a surrender in trust of the whole of it.' *Reflections on the Revolution in France*: Works, vol. iv. p. 199; cf. Hallam, *Const. Hist.* vol. ii. p. 305 (edition of 1846): 'The absolute power of the legislature in strictness is as arbitrary in England as in Persia.'

do no wrong. The State has a right to tax a man's property to any amount it pleases; to take his land from him at any valuation that itself may fix; to raze his house to the ground for any purpose that may seem to it good; nay, to demand even the sacrifice of his life when the common weal requires it.

Besides, Lord Salisbury's argument would really prove too much. For if the analogy between private property and Church property is valid, and if 'there is not the slightest vestige of external proof in favour of this claim on the part of the nation to dispose of this property,' then the Irish Church Commission is a farce, and all reference to its report a hypocrisy. I suppose it is a fact that the Commission will recommend the suppression of several bishopries and benefices, a reduction of income in the case of those which remain, and the extrusion of some of the bishops from Parliament. Now to reduce the income of a single bishop, or to alienate the revenues of a single see or parish from the diocese or parish to which it now belongs, would logically come within the scope of Lord Salisbury's argument just as much as the entire disendowment of the Irish Church would do. The principle is the same; the difference is only one of degree. Once admit that Church property and private property are on exactly the same footing, and you are placed in this dilemma: either the State has no more right to redistribute the revenues of the Irish Church among its own members than it has to redistribute the rent-roll of Hatfield

among the Marquis of Salisbury's children; or if it has a right of interference with the former, it has an equal right of interference with the latter. Those who insist on the identity of character between Church property and private property, and at the same time advocate the redistribution of the property of the Irish Church, are placing an invincible argument in the mouths of those who agitate for the subdivision and redistribution of property in general. It is a sign of the times that at this moment a candidate is wooing the suffrages of the electors of Manchester, on Conservative principles, who openly advocates the abolition of primogeniture. Parliament, of course, being omnipotent in the sphere of legislation, may do this; but it is scarcely wise on the part of the English aristocracy to defend the Church Establishment in Ireland with arguments which may hereafter be used with fatal effect against their own order.

The Irish Church Establishment, however, is not the only abuse on whose behoof the rights of property have been invoked. That argument did valiant service in defence of Gatton and Old Sarum, in defence of Slavery, of the Corn Laws, of the law which doomed a man to death for cutting down a cherry-tree, and hanged a boy of ten for stealing a pocket-handkerchief. People are still living who remember the time when it was lawful to steal from a wife her husband, or from a widow her only son; while the said wife or widow was ruthlessly hanged if she ventured to steal a mouthful of bread to save her life,

or a rag of calico to cover her nakedness. The legalised murders which were perpetrated under the sanction of those atrocious laws are enough, even at this distance of time, to make one's blood run cold. Let me give two or three examples.

In the reign of George III. a married woman of the tender age of nineteen, and the mother of two children, was hanged at Tyburn for an attempt at a petty theft. The case is thus recorded in the public report of the poor woman's trial and execution:—

'She was very young, under nineteen, and remarkably handsome. She went to a linendraper's shop in Ludgate Street, took some coarse linen off the counter, and slipped it under her cloak. The shopman saw her, and she laid it down. For this she was hanged. Her defence was "that she had lived in credit and wanted for nothing, till the press-gang came and stole her husband from her; but since then she had no bed to lie on—nothing to give her children to eat, and they were almost naked; and perhaps she might have done something wrong, for she scarcely knew what she did."

'The parish officers testified to the truth of this story.

'When brought to receive sentence, she behaved in such a frantic manner as proved her mind to be in a desponding and distracted state; and the child was sucking at her breast when she set out for Tyburn to be hanged.'

Under the premiership of Lord Liverpool and the chancellorship of Lord Eldon a man of the name of Edward Pollo was hanged at Chelmsford for cutting down a young cherry-tree in a plantation in Essex. In passing sentence on him the judge, Mr. Justice Heath, observed that 'a man who would wilfully cut

down a young cherry-tree would take away a man's life.' To my mind there is something inexpressibly revolting in the spectacle of a judge sentencing a human being to death for so trifling an offence, and then whimpering over the premature death of 'a young cherry-tree.' But it is an admirable illustration of the relative value set by our legislators on the rights of property and the rights of human life respectively.

In the same year (1814) a child of ten years of age was hanged before the walls of Newgate for stealing a pocket-handkerchief, while a ruffian received a few weeks' imprisonment for gouging out a woman's eye.

An Act of George I.'s reign declares that any trespasser with an offensive weapon, 'appearing in any warren, or place where hares or conies have been, or shall be usually kept, and being thereof duly convicted, shall be adjudged guilty of felony, and shall suffer death, as in cases of felony, without benefit of clergy.'

Certainly the proprietors of the last century took good care to fence the rights of property round with a terrible rampart of ghastly safeguards. But was property safer then than it is now? On the contrary, every one knows that the fact is notoriously the reverse. Property has become more and more secure in proportion as its security has been based on the sense of justice and good will of the people rather than on the artificial muniments of barbarous laws. It is impossible to read those laws now without a feeling of astonishment that they should have been allowed to remain on the statute book for twenty-four hours

after the death of any of their victims; and we can hardly realise the fact that it took many years of fierce parliamentary warfare to repeal them.

At length a great man, equally conspicuous for his humane disposition and for his profound mastery of the principles of jurisprudence, determined to do what he could to free his country from the disgrace of appraising human life at 5*s*. a head. In the year 1810 Sir Samuel Romilly, oppressed with the recollection of the atrocities sanctioned by a savage law, which he had witnessed on his circuit, introduced into the House of Commons a Bill for the repeal of the statute of William which punished with death a theft in a shop to the amount of 5*s*. He succeeded in passing the Bill through the House of Commons; but the Lords threw it out by a majority of three to one; and in that majority are recorded the names of one archbishop and six bishops. The danger to the rights of property was then also, as now, the cry which arrested the Commons of England in their laudable endeavour to abolish an iniquitous scandal.

'I trust' (said Lord Chief Justice Ellenborough) 'your lordships will pause before you assent to a measure pregnant with danger to the security of property. The learned judges are unanimously agreed, that the expediency of justice and the public security require there should not be a remission of capital punishment in this part of the criminal law. My lords, if we suffer this Bill to pass, we shall not know where to stand; we shall not know whether we are on our heads or on our feet. My lords, I think this, above all others, is

a law on which so much of the security of mankind depends in its execution, that I should deem myself neglectful of my duty if I failed to let the law take its course.'

On the same occasion Lord Wynford, formerly Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, declared that 'the people of England could not sleep in safety in their beds' if any of those odious laws were abolished.

In the debate on Mr. Gladstone's resolutions, the Home Secretary quoted with great effect a passage from a speech of Lord Ellenborough's in 1805, in which that eminent lawyer expressed his opinion, that the abolition of the Irish Establishment 'would produce the ruin and overthrow of the political union founded upon the article (5th) as its immediate basis.' But seeing how completely events have falsified Lord Ellenborough's phrenzied prophecy of 1810, I think the prophecy of 1805 need not scare us from the path of justice.

After three defeats in the House of Lords, the majority on each occasion being swelled by a goodly array of bishops and law lords, Romilly's Bill became law, though its author did not live to see it. But who will say that property is less secure now than it was under the cruel protection of the statute of William? On the contrary, I venture to think that property is now a good deal more secure, that 'the people of England sleep in' greater 'safety in their beds,' and that the peers of the realm are less doubtful than ever as to which end of them is uppermost.

Who can forget, too, the panic which agitated all

England when it was first suggested to repeal the law which made forgery a capital crime? The whole commercial class, in all its varieties and grades, and the whole banking interest raised an indignant howl against this insidious blow, as they considered it, at the security of property. Nothing less than a national bankruptcy was predicted as the certain result of so outrageous an attack on the rights of property.

The opposition of the moneyed interest was successful for the time. The forger remained still liable to death, and England was saved. In 1830, however, all the bankers of the United Kingdom, London alone excepted, petitioned in favour of that which they had previously denounced as a revolutionary proposal. The language of this petition is remarkable:—

'Your petitioners' (it said) 'find by experience that the infliction of death, or even the possibility of the infliction of death, prevents the prosecution, conviction, and punishment of the criminal, *and thus endangers the property which it is intended to protect.* We therefore earnestly pray that your honourable House will not withhold from them that *protection to their property*, which they would derive from a more lenient law.'*

Thus the potent voice of self-interest destroyed, by a single blow, a law against whose cruelty and inexpediency the calm voice of pleading humanity was raised in vain. Judging the future, therefore, in the light reflected from the past, I think we may safely assume that the disestablishment of the Irish Church, so far from endangering the rights of property, will

* See *Utilitarianism Explained and Exemplified*, p. 366.

place them, in Ireland at least, on a more stable foundation than ever. The question really to be considered is this: Is the Ecclesiastical Establishment in Ireland an injustice, or is it not? If the answer be in the affirmative, depend upon it the abolition of an injustice will not imperil any legitimate rights. Privileges are never so safe as when they are enlisted on the side of justice; they are never in such jeopardy as when they are allied with wrong.

But, after all, are proprietors wise in making so much of this property argument? Is it prudent to insist on placing the rights of property in collision with the rights of justice and humanity? Parliament has just placed the power of making our future laws in the hands of a class of men who, I believe, have no hostile designs against the legitimate rights of property. But let those rights be flaunted offensively in their faces; let them be told that every abuse which they wish to destroy, every wrong which they wish to redress, rests on the rights of property; let them, in short, be convinced that the Irish Church Establishment stands on the same foundation as private property; and it will not be difficult to persuade them—not that the Irish Establishment ought to be preserved, but—that the rights of property ought to be destroyed.

'Of all the doctrines which threaten the principle of property' (said Sir James Mackintosh in one of his speeches on the Reform Bill of 1832), 'none more dangerous was ever promulgated than that which confounds it with political privilege. None of the disciples of St. Simon, or of the

followers of the ingenious and benevolent Owen, have struck so deadly a blow at property as those who would reduce it to the level of Gatton and Old Sarum. Property, the nourisher of mankind, the incentive of industry, the cement of human society, will be in a perilous condition if the people be taught to identify it with political abuses, and to deal with it as being involved in their impending fate.' *

'If, in order to save political abuses' (says Lord Macaulay) 'from that fate with which they are threatened by the public hatred, you claim for them the immunities of property, you must expect that property will be regarded with some portion of the hatred which is excited by political abuses. You bind up two very different things, in the hope that they may stand together. Take heed that they do not fall together. You tell the people that it is as unjust to disfranchise a great lord's nomination borough as to confiscate his estate. Take heed that you do not succeed in convincing weak and ignorant minds that there is no more injustice in confiscating his estate than in disfranchising his borough.' †

Lord Derby made a strong point of the Coronation Oath. In his view that oath

'Constitutes either a solemn and personal obligation on the sovereign, or else it is unmeaning and frivolous. You cannot relieve the sovereign from that obligation. Her Parliament may press a measure which she has no longer the power of objecting to; but even such circumstances do not relieve the sovereign from the obligation, the right, and the duty of representing to any ministry which she may call to her counsels the position in which she has been placed; she is bound to protest when, in acting on their advice, she takes a step in direct violation of her solemn declaration and oath

* Speech on Reform, *Hansard* (3rd series), vol. iv. p. 685.

† *Speeches*, p. 22.

that she will maintain inviolate the United Church of Ireland and England. That oath would be violated if Her Majesty endorsed a proposal to disestablish and disendow that which she has sworn to maintain implicitly.'

This argument of Lord Derby was repeatedly cheered, and therefore I presume that it received the assent of the majority of the Peers. But a little consideration will prove that Lord Derby's interpretation of the Coronation Oath is altogether untenable. The following is the complete form of the oath as her present Majesty took it:—

'The sermon being ended, and Her Majesty having on Monday, 20th day of November 1837, in the presence of the two Houses of Parliament, made and signed the Declaration, the Archbishop goeth to the Queen, and standing before her, administers the Coronation Oath, first asking the Queen,—

'"Is Your Majesty willing to take the oath?" and the Queen answering,—"I am willing," the Archbishop ministereth these questions; and the Queen, having a copy of the printed Form and Order of the Coronation Service in her hands, answers each question severally as follows,—

'*Archbishop*,—"Will you solemnly promise and swear to govern the people of this United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and the dominions thereto belonging, according to the statutes in Parliament agreed on, and the respective laws and customs of the same?"

'*Queen*,—"I solemnly promise so to do."

'*Archbishop*,—"Will you to your power cause law and justice, in mercy, to be executed in all your judgments?"

'*Queen*,—"I will."

'*Archbishop*,—"Will you, to the utmost of your power, maintain the laws of God, the true profession of the Gospel, and the Protestant Reformed Religion established by law?

and will you maintain and preserve inviolably the settlement of the United Church of England and Ireland, and the doctrine, worship, discipline and government thereof, as by law established within England and Ireland and the territories thereunto belonging? and will you preserve unto the bishops and clergy of England and Ireland, and to the churches there committed to their charge, all such rights and privileges as by law do or shall appertain to them, or any of them?"

'*Queen*,—"All this I promise to do."

'Then the Queen arising out of her chair, supported as before, and assisted by the Lord Great Chamberlain, the sword of state being carried before her, shall go to the altar, and there being uncovered, make her solemn oath in the sight of all the people, to observe the premisses; laying her right hand upon the Holy Gospel in the Great Bible, which was before carried in the procession, and is now brought from the altar by the Archbishop, and tendered to her as she kneels upon the steps, saying these words,—"The things which I have here before promised, I will perform and keep; *So help me, God!*"

'Then the Queen kisseth the book, and signeth the oath.'

Now, in the first place, if Lord Derby's interpretation is correct, the oath has already been broken by Her Majesty, for it includes not only 'England and Ireland,' but 'the territories thereunto belonging.' The Canadian Clergy Reserves Bill of the Aberdeen Government and the Jamaica Suspensory Bill of the present Government are, therefore, as clear an infraction of the oath as Mr. Gladstone's Suspensory Bill.

Secondly, the oath binds the sovereign to 'preserve unto the bishops and clergy of England and Ireland,'

individually, 'all such rights and privileges' as belong to them, for the words are 'to them or any of them.' And not only so, but *each separate parish*, and not simply the Church generally, is embraced within the scope of the oath, 'and to the *churches there committed to their charge.*' It follows from this, that if Lord Derby's interpretation of the oath is valid, he is himself the first transgressor—the 'Jeroboam who made Israel to sin.'* For his Temporalities Bill, which received the assent of Her Majesty's predecessor, destroyed at one blow two archbishoprics and eight bishoprics, and thereby robbed the bishops and

* 'The legislature of England and Ireland (*the members of which are not even bound to profess belief in the Atonement*), this body, in the suppression of certain Irish sees, *contrary to the suffrage of the bishops of England and Ireland*, has virtually usurped the commission of those whom our Saviour entrusted with *at least one voice* in making ecclesiastical laws on matters wholly or partly spiritual. The same legislature has also ratified to its full extent this principle—that the Apostolical Church in this realm is henceforth only to stand, in the eye of the State, as *one sect among many*, depending for any pre-eminence, she may still appear to retain, merely upon the accident of her having a strong party in the country.' Keble's Sermon on 'National Apostasy' (*Sermons Academical and Occasional*, p. 127). The italics are in the original. Mr. Disraeli has recently stamped the seal of his approval on Lord Derby's Temporalities Bill, which, in Mr. Keble's estimation, placed the Established Church of England in the position of 'one sect among many.' In his memorable speech on the 3rd of last April, Mr. Disraeli referred to the Temporalities Bill in these terms:—'The reform effected in the Church of Ireland in 1833 by Lord Derby has been much criticised of late years as a measure deficient in minute arrangements; but, to my mind, it was a measure which showed the vigour and determination of that statesman. When you consider the state of affairs with which Lord Derby had to deal at that time, as regards the Church of Ireland, we must admire the grasp of that conception.'

churches of those sees of 'the rights and privileges which by law appertained unto them.' 'The endowments of the Church,' Lord Derby holds, 'were not conferred upon the individual clergyman. They were conferred upon the clergyman as a corporation sole, as a trustee, bound to hand down to his successor that property which he enjoyed.' But Lord Derby himself, by act of Parliament, deprived ten bishops of the power of fulfilling this 'bounden' duty of 'handing down to their successors the rights and privileges' which they themselves 'enjoyed.' His preaching the inviolability of the Coronation Oath against the deliberate opinion of the legislature is like the 'Gracchi complaining of sedition.' Either his present constitutional doctrine is wrong, or he is himself the first and chief offender.

But, thirdly, it is evident that the oath merely binds Her Majesty to govern her subjects, alike in things ecclesiastical and civil, according to law—that is, according to the advice of her Parliament. The oath relates not only to the present and past, but to the future as well: 'all such privileges as by law do *or shall* appertain to them or any of them.' This is rendered still more clear by the first question in the Coronation Oath: 'Will you solemnly promise and swear to govern the people of this United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and the dominions thereto belonging, according to the statutes in Parliament agreed on, and the respective laws and customs of the same?' What is meant by 'the statutes in Parliament agreed on?' Does the phrase mean 'such

statutes as have been already agreed on?' or 'such statutes as have been, or may hereafter be, agreed on?' That the latter is the true interpretation is plain, I think, from this fact—that the clause is almost a literal translation from the old Coronation Oath taken by the sovereigns of England as far back as Edward III. The original is as follows: 'Concedis justas leges esse tenendas, et promittis eas per te esse protegendas et ad honorem Dei roborandas, *quas vulgus elegerit*, secundum vires tuas?' 'Do you grant that the laws, which the Commons *shall have* chosen, shall be kept; and do you promise to defend and strengthen them, to the honour of God, according to your power?'

Surely it is sufficiently plain from this, that the Coronation Oath simply binds Her Majesty not to interfere, as some of her predecessors were apt to do, with the temporal status of the Church without the consent of Parliament.*

Besides, it may be urged conclusively that Lord Derby's interpretation of the oath would prove too much; for it would condemn not only his own suppression of the Irish bishoprics, but also all such 'modifications' as have now been recommended by

* Mr. Gladstone upholds this view of the Coronation Oath in that book which has been so liberally quoted, and so little read, by his opponents. His opinion, there expressed, is that 'the terms' of the oath 'imply' two correlative things—'a power' on the part of Parliament, 'to change the ecclesiastical laws,' and a duty, on the part of the sovereign, to 'maintain' the laws—that is, while they remain laws. The Queen has bound herself 'not to modify or innovate'—that is all. *The State in its Relations with the Church*, vol. ii. p. 40.

the Commission which has just published its report. To suppress four or five bishoprics, to curtail the incomes and abolish some of the privileges of the remainder, to expel a bishop or two from the House of Lords, to destroy twenty-two cathedral foundations, and to transfer endowments from one diocese to another, or even from one parish to another, would be a more direct, and, in a religious point of view, a more criminal, infraction of the Coronation Oath than total disestablishment with partial endowment. In fact, this system of paring down will result, to quote Mr. Gladstone's felicitous expression, in a 'United Church of England and Ulster.'* Do the friends of the Irish Church really imagine that they are strengthening its establishment by this process of depletion?

As has been already observed, the Coronation Oath, taken in the literal strictness contended for by Lord Derby and others, binds the Queen to maintain the rights and privileges of every individual bishop, dean, and incumbent in Ireland. It warns off Lord Derby and Mr. Disraeli no less sternly than Mr. Gladstone; and any interpretation which will cover the 'modifications' of the one will certainly justify the disestablishment of the other.

The Coronation Oath was raised as a bugbear against Lord Derby himself in 1833; but the leader of the Opposition of that day, Sir Robert Peel, while opposing the Temporalities Bill, declined to avail

* Speech on Second Reading of Suspensory Bill.

himself of an argument which, however effective as an offensive weapon, he knew to be fallacious.

'For his own part' (he said in reply to some of his followers) 'he was bound to say he did not think the Coronation Oath an insuperable barrier to the King's giving his consent to a well-considered measure for the Reformation of the Church of Ireland. He had been as active an opponent of the concessions to the Catholics as any one in Parliament; but he had never relied upon the Coronation Oath as an obstacle to those concessions. He had never thought that that oath bound the King to maintain the Church and all its members in possession of precisely every right and privilege which they might have possessed in 1688.' *

But the Coronation Oath does this, or it does nothing. Any reading of it which will admit the suppression of one see will, in strict logic, admit all that Mr. Gladstone contends for. Indeed, for myself, I confess I find it difficult to enter into the train of thought which would make the Coronation Oath a perpetual bar to the action of the legislature on all fundamental questions. If every person in the United Kingdom, the Queen herself included, should come to the conclusion that the dictates of justice and the safety of the empire demand the disestablishment of the Irish Church, still, according to Lord Derby, the remedy must not be applied during the reigning sovereign's life, though the consequence should be civil war. We are really to suppose that the Coronation Oath is intended to act, not as a check on the royal prerogative, but as a limitation on the free action of Parliament during each successive reign!

* *Hansard*, vol. xvi. p. 1406.

The two Houses of Parliament are so mistrustful of their own legislative capacity, that at the commencement of each reign they bind the sovereign by a solemn oath to refuse the royal assent to some measure of their own, which they may perchance consider essential not to the stability only, but even to the life, of the nation! Surely an argument which involves a series of extravagant absurdities refutes itself. The English Parliament has, in the course of ages, gradually surrounded itself with a bulwark of privileges against the encroachments of the Crown; and as each sovereign ascends the throne of his predecessor he promises the nation, by a solemn oath, that he will rule as a constitutional sovereign, that is, by the advice of his Parliament. But Lord Derby's doctrine is, that the Coronation Oath binds the sovereign to govern as an absolute despot; to reject the advice of Parliament, and, it may be, even his own sense of what is wise and right! If this be the true view of our constitution, it is remarkable that it should have hitherto escaped the observation of all the great men who have devoted their learning and talents to its elucidation.

It is with much satisfaction that I contrast with Lord Derby's unstatesmanlike view of the Coronation Oath the following passage in a wise and noble speech delivered by the present Marquis of Salisbury in the House of Commons on May 24, 1867, in the debate on Mysore. Referring to treaties concluded between the English Crown and Native Princes of India, his lordship is reported to have spoken as follows:—

'We have heard Mysore spoken of as if the property of its ruler. But I would venture to say that that is not the view of the relations of the sovereign to the community which he governs that it is usual to take at this time. Therefore, however important those treaties may be, it is dangerous to dwell so exclusively on their letter as some honourable gentlemen have done in this debate, because it tends to raise questions as to the rights of the sovereign without reference to the rights of the people.'

I am sure that Lord Salisbury would be one of the first men to admit that England ought not to govern Ireland with less justice than India; and this she does so long as the Fifth Article of the Union, or any other treaty, is alleged as a reason why Catholic Ireland should have a yoke placed on her neck from which Pagan India is free; namely, the establishment of the religion of a fraction of the population; that religion having been, moreover, not the solace of human misery, as Christianity has been elsewhere, but the abettor and the living representative of wrongs so great and so numerous as to form one of the darkest chapters in the record of national crimes. Read the petition of the East India Company against the Bill which abolished its jurisdiction, and mark one of the principal reasons which it urges in arrest of judgment:—

'Your petitioners' (it says) 'think it important to observe, that in abstaining, as they have done, from all interference with any of the religious practices of the people of India, except such as are abhorrent to humanity, they have acted not only from their own conviction of what is just and expedient, but in accordance with the avowed intentions and express enactments of the legislature, framed "in order that

regard should be had to the civil and religious usages of the natives," and also "that suits, civil or criminal, against the natives" should be conducted according to such rules as may accommodate the same to the religion and manners of the natives.'

See how humane and tender our Indian policy has been—often to the extent of actual participation in detestable superstitions and nameless impurities;*

* 'Her Majesty is the ruler of a larger heathen population than the world ever saw collected under the sceptre of a Christian sovereign since the days of the Emperor Theodosius. . . . There are subject to the British rule in Asia a hundred millions of people, who do not profess the Christian faith.' After describing the hideously debasing rites of the Hindoo mythology, the speaker proceeds:—'Now, sir, it is a difficult matter to determine in what way Christian rulers ought to deal with such superstitions as these. We might have acted as the Spaniards acted in the New World. We might have attempted to introduce our own religion by force. We might have sent missionaries among the natives at the public charge. We might have held out hopes of public employment to converts, and have imposed civil disabilities on Mahometans and Pagans. But we did none of these things; and herein we judged wisely. Our duty, as rulers, was to preserve strict neutrality on all questions merely religious: and I am not aware that we have ever swerved from strict neutrality for the purpose of making proselytes to our own faith. But we have, I am sorry to say, sometimes deviated from the right path in the opposite direction. Some Englishmen, who have held high office in India, seem to have thought that the only religion which was not entitled to toleration and to respect was Christianity. They regarded every Christian missionary with extreme jealousy and disdain; and they suffered the most atrocious crimes, if enjoined by the Hindoo superstition, to be perpetrated in open day. It is lamentable to think how long after our power was firmly established in Bengal, we, grossly neglecting the first and plainest duty of the civil magistrate, suffered the practices of infanticide and suttee to continue unchecked. We decorated the temples of the false gods. We provided the dancing girls. We gilded and painted the images to which

and contrast it with the inhuman spirit which has inspired our policy towards our own fellow-Christians in Ireland. The consequence is that it costs us at this day more treasure and trouble to govern Ireland than it does to govern the vast empire of Hindostan.

Lord Derby in the House of Lords, and other speakers in Parliament and Convocation, made a great deal of the alleged injury that would accrue to Ireland from the 'removal' of the Protestant clergy. This might have been a very good argument against Lord Derby's Temporalities Bill, and it may be a very good argument against the recommendations of the Irish Church Commission, which the Bishop of London anticipates will leave 'the Established Church in Ireland on a very modified scale,'—that is, with

our ignorant subjects bowed down. We repaired and embellished the car under the wheels of which crazy devotees flung themselves at every festival to be crushed to death. We sent guards of honour to escort pilgrims to the places of worship. We actually made oblations at the shrines of idols.' Macaulay's *Speech on the Gates of Somnauth.* (Speeches, p. 274–276.)

And, at this very time, six millions of Christians in Ireland were under sentence of outlawry from the British Constitution, for the high crime of worshipping the Saviour of mankind after their own fashion. Yet, like the Pharisees of old, we 'make broad our phylacteries,' and 'thank God that we are not as other men are.' We have heard a good deal of late about the wickedness of divorcing the principle of religion from the Government; but to patronise the foul idolatries of heathenism in India, while persecuting Catholicism in Ireland, seems to me an odd exhibition of the principle of State religion. Where were our religious guides then? I cannot help regretting that our bishops should never be able to meet together in harmony, except in defence of some political injustice. It is a pity that the only questions, on which they ever seem able to agree, should be so exclusively of this world.

several of its bishoprics and parishes suppressed. If we are to maintain the Establishment in Ireland simply because it is a good thing, as Lord Derby expresses it, to have 'in every parish a native gentleman of moderate income, the whole of which is spent among his immediate neighbours,' it is obviously of no consequence to this argument whether the 'native gentleman's' congregation is large, or small, or none at all. The removal of a sinecurist would, on this view of the case, be as great a blow to the parish as the removal of an incumbent whose parishioners were all members of the Established Church. The argument is fatal to all the Conservative schemes of reforming the Irish Church, since all those schemes assume the suppression of a certain number of bishoprics and incumbencies as an axiom to start from; but it does not touch Mr. Gladstone's scheme at all, for Mr. Gladstone does not propose to 'remove' one single bishop or clergyman out of any diocese or parish in Ireland.

But I shall be told that to disestablish the Irish Church is the same thing as to destroy it outright. A majority of the House of Commons declared 'that the Irish Church, *as an Establishment*, shall cease to exist.' That, says the Lord Chancellor, is equivalent to saying 'that the Irish Church is to cease.' And further on he says that 'the policy of the Liberal party is to *destroy* the Irish Church.

'If you disestablish the Irish Church' (said the Archbishop of Armagh), 'you will put before the Irish Protestants the choice between apostasy and expatriation; and every man

among them who has money or position, when he *sees his Church go*, will leave the country, thus weakening the dominion of England over it.'

'As to religious equality' (said the Bishop of London), 'there can be no equality between a disendowed Protestant body and a powerful Roman Catholic body with a foreign prince at its head, who has the power of conferring titles of honour, and placing the chief dignitary of his Church in a position which no clergyman of a disendowed Protestant Church can possibly assume. It is vain, therefore, to remove the Established Church, and bring about religious equality. What you are going to do, if you do not take care, is this —to hand over Ireland altogether to the Roman Catholic Church.'

'The great mass of men' (said Archdeacon Denison) 'will have authority, somewhere or other; and if the people do not find authority in a Protestant Establishment, they will seek for it in the Church of Rome.'*

This is a very remarkable admission. The Protestant Primate of all Ireland, the Lord Chancellor of England, himself an Irishman, the Bishop of London, and other eminent persons, tell us, in grave and deliberate language, that the Irish Church cannot '*exist*' without the allurements of worldly pomps and lucre: deprive it of these, say they, and, like the mesmerised corpse in Edgar Poe's horrible tale, it will instantly collapse, and show itself, what indeed it has been all along, a dead body in spite of outward appearances. Deprive it of its temporal establishment, and it has no longer any 'authority' to teach, any inducement to retain, its members. If this indictment against the Irish Church be true—and it would

* Speech in Convocation, July 2, 1868.

be impossible to summon witnesses more eminent or more friendly than those who prefer it—it is no longer a question of disestablishing a church, but of burying a corpse. By a church I mean a living body, having an inherent life of its own, and a spontaneous movement, utterly independent of the adventitious props of State support.

Such a body, history tells me, was the Church of early days, which, 'out of weakness, was made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.' It was with spiritual weapons alone, and beneath no other banner than that of the Cross, that Christianity, in the morning of its youth and purity, led captive the philosophy of Greece, and vanquished the statecraft of Rome, and made 'the kingdoms of the world' to 'become the kingdoms of Our Lord and of His Christ.' And therefore to say that the Irish Church must 'cease,' in the event of its disestablishment, is to say that it is no Church at all, but merely a political institution, which the breath of man can with equal facility create and destroy. Its champions have thus made a present to the Roman Catholics of the only valid argument on which its presence in Ireland could rest. The persecutions of the early Christians under the emperors of pagan Rome were scarcely more cruel and relentless than the persecution of the Irish Roman Catholics at different periods since the Reformation. They were forbidden, on pain of death, to practise the rites of their religion, they were deprived of all political privileges, their property was confiscated, and they were in-

capacitated from possessing land, or even a horse of a value exceeding 5*l.*; they were debarred from all the honourable professions, and they were strictly forbidden to have any schools of their own, or even to have private tutors and governesses in their families.

'The Irish Roman Catholics were permitted to live' (said Macaulay, in his Speech on the State of Ireland in 1844); 'but they were doomed to be what the Helots were in Sparta, what the Greeks were under the Ottoman, what the Blacks now are at New York. Every man of the subject caste was strictly excluded from public trust. Take what path he might in life, he was crossed at every step by some vexatious restriction. It was only by being obscure and inactive that he could, on his native soil, be safe. If he aspired to be powerful and honoured, he must begin by being an exile. . . At home, he was a mere Gibeonite, a hewer of wood, and a drawer of water.'*

And yet, in spite of these abominable and stupid persecutions, the Roman Catholics of Ireland increased and multiplied; while the Protestants, on the other hand, though backed by the lavish favour and exclusive patronage of the State, have been scarcely able to hold their own.

'What could have been done for the Irish Church' (to quote Macaulay again), 'in the way of authority, privileges, endowments, which has not been done? Did any other set of bishops and priests in the world ever receive half so much for doing so little? Nay, did any other set of bishops and priests ever receive half as much for doing twice as much? And what have we to show for all this lavish expenditure? What but the most zealous Roman Catholic population on the face of the earth? Where you were one hundred years ago, where you were

* *Speeches*, p. 296.

two hundred years ago, there you are still, not victorious over the domain of the old faith, but painfully and with dubious success defending your own frontier, your own English Pale. Sometimes a deserter leaves you; sometimes a deserter steals over to you. Whether your gains or losses of this sort be the greater I do not know; nor is it worth while to inquire. On the great solid mass of the Roman Catholic population you have made no impression whatever. There they are, as they were ages ago, ten to one against the members of your Established Church. Explain this to me. I speak to you, the zealous Protestants on the other side of the House. Explain this to me on Protestant principles. If I were a Roman Catholic, I could easily account for the phenomena. If I were a Roman Catholic, I should content myself with saying, that the Mighty Hand and the Outstretched Arm had been put forth, according to the promise, in defence of the unchangeable Church; that He who in the old time turned into blessings the curses of Balaam, and smote the host of Sennacherib, had signally confounded the arts of heretic statesmen. But what is a Protestant to say? He holds that through the whole of this long conflict, during which ten generations of men have been born, and have died, reason and Scripture have been on the side of the Established Clergy. Tell us then what we are to say of this strange war, in which reason and Scripture backed by wealth, by dignity, by the help of the civil power, have been found no match for oppressed and destitute error? The fuller our conviction that our doctrines are right, the fuller, if we are rational men, must be our conviction that our tactics have been wrong, and that we have been encumbering the cause which we meant to aid.'*

The chosen champions of the Irish Church have at last furnished an answer to Macaulay's question.

* *Speeches*, pp. 387,388.

They admit, with one consent, that disestablishment would be a death-blow to their Church, and that the Roman Catholic Church would draw the disestablished Protestants into her fold with an irresistible attraction. 'You will put before the Irish Protestants,' says the Archbishop of Armagh, 'the choice between apostasy and expatriation, and every man among them who has money, or position, when he sees his Church go, will leave the country.' This, however little his Grace may have intended it, is a full and complete admission that the Roman Catholic Church is the true Church of Ireland, and the Protestant a sickly exotic, which must wither and die the moment it is taken out of the Government hothouse, and exposed to the fresh breezes of heaven. The Irish Church may well exclaim, 'I have been wounded in the house of my friends.' The defence made on her behalf by her friends is a thousand-fold more damaging to her than the assault of her foes. A church which is so defended is manifestly doomed.

The friends of the Irish Church, in 1833, opposed Lord Derby's Temporalities Bill on the ground that the Irish Church was a missionary church, that she had a power of expansion, and that the hierarchy ought therefore to be constituted with a view to the prospective success of the Church in making converts rather than to its present dimensions.

This was the line of argument adopted by the two members for Oxford University, by Lord Ashley (Earl of Shaftesbury) and by Mr. Gladstone. The latter argued that 'the question was, not what it (the

Irish Church) had done, but was it capable of being fitted for action? . . . He was unwilling to see the number of Irish bishops reduced, because he believed that in the course of time their duties would very materially increase; and when that was the case it would be a difficult matter to restore those whom they were now about to destroy.'

But this argument is now given up by the champions of the Irish Church Establishment. It is declared to be no longer a missionary Church, and therefore no longer entitled to be considered a national Church.

'Does the noble earl' (Granville) (asked the Duke of Marlborough) 'mean that the Church should be a missionary Church; that it should have done violence to the religious feelings and prejudices of the Irish people, and lighted up the flame of religious discord in the different parishes throughout the land? If that had been the case, we should have had Ministers arguing in an exciting way in order to gain over the Catholic population, and should have had discord and enmity in every parish in Ireland. I ask again, Has not the Church fulfilled its objects? It ministers to its own Protestant congregations, which are very considerable in number, and also to many of the Protestant Dissenters; and, if so, I am at a loss to know why it has not fulfilled its duties.'*

'We are told that the Church does not do its work efficiently in Ireland' (says the Bishop of Lincoln); 'but the work of the Established Church in Ireland, as I take it, has been for the last 300 years, or at least 230 years of that period, to minister to those members of the Church in Ireland who are in full communion with the Established

* Debate on the Suspensory Bill, June 26, 1868.

Church of England, and for the last seventy years to minister to that branch of the United Church of England and Ireland established in that kingdom. . . . And therefore the reason given that the Church should be disestablished because it has not performed the duties for the performance of which it existed cannot be maintained.' *

'My belief is' (says the Bishop of Lichfield) 'that the mission of the Church in the sister kingdom of Ireland was to support a great principle of patriotism and loyalty, and that it has done from the time of the establishment down to the present.' †

'It is said' (exclaims Archdeacon Denison) 'that the Irish Church has failed to execute her mission. . . . I dare not say that she has not . . . if it be assumed that the mission of a church is first of all to spread its doctrines among the people. *I say that is not her mission.* The first duty of a church is to maintain the truth.' ‡

Our Lord certainly said that 'the first duty of a church' was to 'go and make disciples of all nations,' to 'preach the Gospel to every creature.' But the Archdeacon of Taunton preaches another Gospel. He considers it his duty to wrap the talent which his Master gave him in a napkin—to 'maintain' it as he received it, and restore it without interest. If the early Christians had acted on the Archdeacon's principle of 'maintaining the truth,' without taking the trouble to propagate it, there would probably be no Church of Ireland or England now to debate about.

But the Archbishop of York furnished the most extraordinary answer of all to the objection that the Irish Church has failed in its mission:—

* Debate in Convocation, July 1, 1868. † Ibid. ‡ Ibid.

'The noble lord opposite' (he said) 'talked of the Irish Church, and said it had failed to fulfil its original design. What was that original design? *It was never designed as the church of the majority.* It was designed as a mark of the disapproval of the Crown and the rulers of the country of the Roman Catholic religion. It went along with most oppressive measures, and it was, if you like, the outset of those oppressive measures. But it was part of a whole system. But you have altered that system; you have altered it for the better, and I am very glad that those oppressive measures have been removed. But when you come to deal with this corporation, and say that it has not fulfilled its design, why, it is you who have changed the design. It was originally meant as part of *a system by which we expressed our belief that the Roman Catholic religion was a foreign thing, a thing hostile to civil government, and a thing untrue.* You now believe that you can mark your sense upon these points without the help of these oppressive regulations, and they have been repealed. But what has the Irish Church done? Does anybody seriously put it forward as a reproach to the Irish Church that its ministers have not gone about to every house in every parish to make proselytes? That is missionary work and not parochial work. . . . No doubt that in a great measure the Irish Church has not gained over the population. But, my lords, where is the sin? The sin lies in the old system, *of which this is the remnant*; and I want you now to consider whether it is necessary to do so much as in your thoughtlessness, perhaps, you promised to do, and whether you cannot remove the legitimate objections of the Roman Catholics without resorting to this extreme measure. . . . There is another consideration I must not forbear to mention. The position of the Irish Church has compelled us to look towards it for the supply of parochial clergymen, while a large missionary agency, spending some 30,000*l.* a year in Ireland, is supported principally from this country. Sweep away the Irish Church, and then tell me what is my

duty. . . . Am I to send my little tribute to missionary efforts in foreign countries, and not to send my share of it to Ireland?'

One of the strangest things connected with recent discussions on the Irish Church is the sort of judicial blindness which induces its friends to believe that they are defending it when, in truth, they are arguing for its extinction. Consider for a moment the legitimate conclusion of the argument which I have here quoted from the Archbishop of York's speech. The Irish Church, he says, 'was never designed as the church of the majority. It was designed as a mark of the disapproval of the Crown and the rulers of the country of the Roman Catholic religion. It went along with most oppressive measures, and it was the outset of those oppressive measures. But it was part of a whole system;' which system, his Grace thinks, has been 'altered for the better;' and he is 'very glad that those oppressive measures have been removed.' But the fruitful parent of those 'oppressive measures,' the outward and visible symbol of that bad 'system,' still remains. To what purpose? To do penance for its past iniquities, and by preaching 'the truth in love' endeavour to win the population of Ireland into its desolate temples? 'No,' says his Grace of York emphatically; 'that was not its "original design," and it is not its proper work now. The original design, 'tis true, was bad, and the modern idea of making it a missionary church is impracticable.' What remains, then, but that the Irish Church, at least as an establishment, has no design at all, no purpose whatever to serve, but merely acts as a chronic irritant to the

Irish people, and a perpetual vexation of spirit to the English Government. As a missionary church it is, by the confession of its friends, a disastrous failure. As 'a mark of disapproval' of the religion of the Irish nation, it is a gratuitous insult and a political blunder of the first magnitude; and I will go so far as to say that the Irish people *ought not to be loyal to England* while they are thus affronted and outraged in the tenderest and holiest feelings of the human heart.

But the plain truth is, the Irish Church has endeavoured in its own way to act as a missionary church, and has failed most ignominiously. It has wielded the sword of the flesh and of the Spirit for the conversion of the Irish, but its efforts have been barren of any appreciable result. Not to go back to the fiery persecutions of Elizabeth and James, Cromwell and William III., let us take the case of one of the best prelates that ever bore rule in the Irish Church—Primate Trench. He opposed, with all the energy of his nature, the suppression of the ten bishoprics and the abolition of church cess; and his opposition was grounded on very different premisses from those enunciated by the Archbishop of York. He admitted that to give up the missionary character of the Irish Church was to give up the only ground on which its establishment could be successfully defended:

'The clergy of the Establishment' (he said) 'were sent as the Apostles of old *were sent, to preach the Gospel to every creature, whether Protestants of their own immediate Communion, or Dissenters, or Roman Catholics, or Jews, or Turks.*'

He declared that every Protestant incumbent in Ireland was responsible for every soul within his parish; and he was sanguine of being able to convert the great bulk of the Roman Catholics in his province, in his own lifetime. Such 'modifications' as have been foreshadowed by Mr. Disraeli and recommended by the Irish Church Commission, he denounced as insidious attempts on the very life of the Irish Church; and he spoke with scorn (says his biographer) of 'our political empirics who had mistaken the whole character of the Established Church. *The Church was established in the land, not because the whole community did, but in order that the whole community might, agree with her.*' '*She was introduced as leaven into the lump, that the whole might be leavened.* It was now unblushingly proposed that she should be withdrawn from every place which was apparently preoccupied by the Romish Schism.'

This language is as applicable to the 'reforms in the Irish Church,' which Conservative candidates promise in the year 1868, as it was to the reforms achieved thirty-four years ago by Lord Derby. And, strange as it may seem to some, Mr. Gladstone stands now, as I shall presently have occasion to show, in the same position in regard to the Irish Church, which he occupied in the early dawn of his parliamentary career. In a speech on the Irish Church, which he delivered in the House of Commons in the year 1836, he declared that it could not be defended on any other ground than as a missionary church.

'We wish to see the Establishment in Ireland upheld' (he

said), '*not for the sake of the Protestants, but of the people at large*; that her ministers may be enabled to use the influences of their station, of kindly offices and neighbourhood, of the various occasions which the daily intercourse and habits of social life present; aye, and I do not hesitate to add, of persuasion itself, applied by a zeal tempered with knowledge and discretion, in the propagation of that which is true, and which, being true, is good, as well for those who as yet have it not, as those who have it.'

To keep up the Establishment merely as the Church of the Protestants, 'was not in equity tenable for a moment.'

It is not Mr. Gladstone, therefore, who has abandoned his former opinions touching the Irish Church. The inconsistency and apostasy (if apostasy there be) are altogether on the side of those who have given up the Irish Church in the only character in which Mr. Gladstone ever defended it.

But let us turn to Archbishop Trench. He strained every nerve to convert the Roman Catholics of Connaught.

'And the experiment was made under the most favourable circumstances. All along the Atlantic coast, and for some miles inland, there was a dense Roman Catholic population whose spirits had been broken by periodic famines, and they were pretty much in the condition of the Celtic race after the Elizabethan wars. The feudal spirit still remained in full force beyond the Shannon, and many of the landed proprietors had imbibed the spirit of their Archbishop, and warmly cooperated with him in the propagation of evangelism. His own brother was the head of one of the greatest of the old aristocratic houses of the province—the house of Clancarty, a fact which, in such a rank-worshipping com-

munity, must have given his Grace an immense prestige, which a prelate sprung from the people, such as Elrington, Mant, or Magee, could not possess. The clergy, too, of the united dioceses were most zealous in prosecuting the missionary work; and they did so with the great advantage of being the almoners of very large funds, contributed in England for the relief of distress in their respective parishes. Some of them learned to preach in the Irish language, and they were aided by a host of Scripture readers, and by schoolmasters supported by funds dispensed by societies having their headquarters in London. Such were the conditions under which the experiment was made by this wealthy and popular prelate during his long public life, and which was continued still more systematically and with more effective organisation by his successor, the late Lord Plunket.' *

The result of all this missionary energy has been recently described by a friendly pen in a pamphlet written by 'An Irish Peer,' himself a Protestant:—

'The machinery of proselytism' (he says), 'set in motion in Ireland during the last thirty or forty years, by means of English and Irish societies, has been of the most extensive as well as expensive kind. Reports of the various religious societies inform us of the amount subscribed, the number of agents, lay and clerical, employed; and the result, or want of any result, has been annually proclaimed from the platform. Need I quote the annual reports that now lie before me, to show that if liberal subscriptions could have availed, they were not wanting? An organisation employing several hundred agents, extending throughout Ireland, aided by local committees, and in many cases by powerful local influence, might be expected to make many converts in so poor a country. The landlords, in an immense majority, are

* *Ireland and her Churches.* By James Godkin, p. 377.

Protestants, and even if indifferent to religious motives, they know that their material interests would gain by the conversion of the poor Roman Catholics. Every Protestant knows, or at least believes, that the disaffection to government and ill-feeling towards the higher classes prevalent among the poor is in part due to mis-called religious teaching.

'But what results have we obtained in the shape of conversions? How many converts does the Hibernian Society report for the last year? How many does the Irish Church Missionary Society?

'Were I to analyse these reports, as I had intended, enumerating on the one hand actual conversions claimed, and, on the other hand, giving the subscriptions received; or were I to contrast positive results achieved with those promised or expected, said to be contingent upon fresh exertions, or to be prevented by adverse circumstances or influences, the statement would appear like satirical criticism.'*

In short, the conclusion of this candid 'Irish Peer,' himself an earnest Protestant and a supporter of Irish missions, is that the missionary efforts of the Irish Church have been a complete failure, and the reports of the Missionary Societies quite untrustworthy —a conclusion adopted by Archbishop Whately after a careful investigation of facts. In fact, the Established Protestantism of Ireland has striven to 'compel' the Roman Catholics 'to come in'—first, by a system of atrocious penal laws; secondly, by a system of lavish bribery; and both systems have resulted in signal failure. Is not the conclusion irresistible, that, as an establishment, the Irish Church is in a hopeless condition? It was established

* Godkin, p. 421, 422.

three centuries ago to convert the Roman Catholics,* and, with every imaginable advantage in its favour, it has lost ground. Would it not be wise to try whether it will succeed better without the aid of State crutches? As it stands, it is simply indefensible.

Lord Salisbury, in his speech on the Suspensory Bill, seemed to think that it was unfair to argue against the Irish Church Establishment on the ground of statistics:—

'I have spoken of Ireland and the Church of Ireland' (he said), 'but these are mere expressions, having no ethnological, and scarcely any historical, value. The Ireland which you assume for the purposes of the present argument is not the Ireland of the Union; because if you take all the country together, if you take what is British, your alarming statistics will at once disappear, because the Church of England will still be the majority. On the other hand, if you regard the country in its true ethnological aspect, you will make out no case whatever in that part of the country where the Protestants prevail.'

* 'An ecclesiastical establishment, that is, the endowment and privileges of a particular religious society, can have no advantages (relatively at least to the community where it exists) but its tendency to promote in that community good order and virtue, religious knowledge and edification. But to accomplish this end in any satisfactory manner, it must be *their* Church, and not that merely of the Government; it should exist for the people, and with the people. This idea is so manifest, that *the Government of Queen Elizabeth never contemplated the separation of a great majority as licensed dissidents from the ordinances established for their instruction.*' Hallam, *Const. Hist.* ii. 528.

'In Ireland the disciples of the Reformation were in the most inconsiderable proportion among the Anglo-Irish colony, as well as among the natives; their church was a government without subjects, a college of shepherds without sheep.' *Ibid.* ii. 529.

I venture to think that there is a flaw in his Lordship's reasoning. For 'if you take what is British,' Lord Salisbury must put in the scale against him, not simply the Roman Catholics of Ireland, but all who are not members of the Church of England in the three kingdoms; and then I think it may be questioned whether 'the Church of England will still be the majority.' Nor can I acquiesce in the opinion that if Ireland is to be 'regarded in its true ethnological aspect,' the Irish Church will have a majority 'in that part of the country where the Protestants prevail.' There is no diocese in Ireland in which the Roman Catholics are not in a large majority over the members of the Established Church, as will be seen by the following table, which also shows the rate of increase or decrease of the various religious persuasions between 1834 and 1861. The statistics of 1861 are from the census returns of that year; those of 1834 are from the Report of the Commissioners of Public Instruction. (See Table, p. 82.)

The Census Commissioners of 1861, in their Report on Religion and Education (page 5), remark, that 'the Wesleyan Methodists, by a peculiarity of their constitution, although frequenting places of worship distinct from those of the Established Church, very generally declined to be reckoned as Dissenters, and were therefore included [by the Commissioners of Public Instruction of 1834] amongst the members of the Established Church.' In order, therefore, to institute a fair comparison between the number of members of the Established Church in 1834

Population of each Diocese in Ireland in 1861, *and Per-centage of the Members of the Principal Persuasions to the whole Population.*

Dioceses	Total Population in 1861	Established Church		Roman Catholics		Presbyterians		All other Persuasions (exclusive of 393 Jews)	
		Number	Per cent.	Number	Per cent.	Number	Per cent.	Number	Per cent.
Achonry . .	108,870	3,392	3·1	105,203	96·7	138	·1	137	·1
Ardagh . . .	136,298	11,044	8·1	124,185	91·1	646	·5	423	·3
Ardfert and Aghadoe	221,939	6,424	2·9	215,028	96·9	259	·1	228	·1
Armagh . . .	386,260	85,583	22·2	234,651	60·8	57,556	14·9	8,441	2·1
Cashel . . .	120,011	4,721	3·9	114,831	95·7	215	·2	244	·2
Clogher . . .	262,572	65,195	24·8	170,998	65·1	21,197	8·1	5,182	2·0
Clonfert . . .	64,143	2,521	3·9	61,183	95·4	256	·4	182	·3
Cloyne . . .	215,166	11,746	5·5	202,294	94·0	678	·3	448	·2
Connor . . .	386.027	80,125	20·8	103,245	26·7	184,330	47·8	18,318	4·7
Cork	239,213	26,736	11·2	206,918	86·5	1,229	·5	4,330	1·8
Derry . . .	293,251	43,738	14·9	164,475	56·1	79,287	27·0	5,751	2·0
Down . . .	163,943	28,868	17·6	46,451	28·3	83,849	51·2	4,761	2·9
Dromore .	172,215	44,474	25·8	66,136	38·4	55,818	32·4	5,786	3·4
Dublin . . .	513,329	100,267	19·4	396,916	77·4	8,165	1·6	7,644	1·6
Elphin . . .	201,879	10,506	5·2	189,508	93·9	903	·4	962	·5
Emly . . .	62,196	1,414	2·3	60,707	97·6	49	·1	26	—
Ferns . . .	151,368	14,388	9·5	135,650	89·6	288	·2	1,047	·7
Kildare . . .	98,369	12,499	12·7	84,590	86·0	654	·7	626	·6
Kilfenora . .	23,042	251	1·1	22,789	98·9	1	—	1	—
Killala . . .	87,075	4,724	5·4	81,337	93·4	685	·8	329	·4
Killaloe . . .	225,096	12,700	5·6	211,098	93·8	498	·2	800	·4
Kilmacduagh .	24,798	434	1·8	24,333	98·1	23	·1	8	—
Kilmore . .	209,714	31,646	15·1	169,886	81·0	5,519	2·6	2,663	1·3
Leighlin . .	124,889	13,022	10·4	111,006	88·9	241	·2	620	·5
Limerick . .	172,622	8,679	5·0	162,324	94.0	553	·3	1,065	·7
Lismore . .	145.265	4,775	3·3	139,769	96·2	333	·2	387	·3
Meath . . .	253,354	16,289	6·4	235,136	92·8	1,053	·4	876	·4
Ossory . . .	140,086	8,258	5·9	131,248	93·7	250	·2	330	·2
Raphoe . . .	169,204	22,213	13·0	126,991	75·1	17,501	10·4	2,499	1·5
Ross	69,903	4,746	6·8	64,540	92·3	76	·1	541	·8
Tuam . . .	312,961	9,041	2·9	302,367	96·6	744	·2	809	·3
Waterford . .	43,506	2,943	6·8	39,472	90·7	297	·7	794	1·8
Persons at Sea	403	—	—	—	—	—	—	403	—
Total in 1861	5,798,967†	693,357	11·9	4,505,265	77·7	523,291	9·0	76,661‡	1·4
Total in 1834*	7,954,100	853,160§	10·7	6,436,060	80·9	643,058	8·1	21,822	·3

* Jews not returned in 1834.

† This total includes 393 Jews in 1861.

‡ This total includes 45,399 Methodists, included in 1834 with the Members of the Established Church, as well as 3,132 persons, seamen and others, whose religion was unspecified.

§ Including Methodists.

and 1861, it is necessary to add the number of Wesleyan Methodists to the number of members of the Established Church returned in 1861, when the numbers will stand thus:—

	Established Church		Other Protestant Dissenters	
	1834	1861	1834	1861
	853,160	738,756	21,822	31,262
Decrease	114,404		—	
Rate per cent.	13·4		—	
Increase	—		9,440	
Rate per cent	—		43·3	
Proportion per cent. to total population	10·7	12·7	·3	·6

From these statistics it will be observed that an absolute decrease of 114,404, or 13·4 per cent., has taken place in the population of the Established Church between 1834 and 1861. Within the same period the Irish Roman Catholic population has decreased by nearly two millions. The decrease of the Roman Catholics is easily accounted for by the ravages of famine, which fell almost exclusively on them, and by emigration, which also was confined almost exclusively to the Roman Catholics. On the other hand, there has been an increase of 9,440, or 43·3 per cent., of non-established Protestants. From this state of things two or three inferences are inevitable: — 1. The decrease in the Roman Catholic population has nothing whatever to do with the presence of the Established Church, but is owing entirely to extraneous causes. 2. If emigration and famine had not carried off such myriads of the Irish Roman

Catholics, taking into consideration the ratio at which the population doubles itself, the relative decrease of the Established Protestants would be quite startling. 3. There are statistics to prove that the Protestants of Ireland suffered comparatively very little from famine since 1834; and they hardly ever emigrate. But while the Protestant Dissenters of Ireland have a large increase to show between 1834 and 1861, the Established Church shows a large decrease. The conclusion is irresistible: the population of the Established Church is rapidly decreasing, relatively to the Roman Catholics on the one side and to the Protestant Dissenters on the other. Another item in the calculation is this: The Irish Wesleyans have always 'very generally declined to be reckoned as Dissenters,' and the Census Commissioners of 1861 therefore classed under that designation only such as had no objection to it, leaving, I am told, a remainder nearly double that number to the credit of the Established Church. Consider also that 'there are still in Ireland 199 parishes without a single member of the Established Church. In 1834 there were 456 parishes with not more than twenty members each; and it is remarkable that in 1861 this class of parishes had increased to 575. The falling off is equally striking in the next class. In 1834 the number of parishes having more than twenty, and not more than fifty members, was 382; in 1861 it was 416.'*

The Archbishop of Armagh thinks he makes a great point when he shows that the Established Church

* Godkin, p. 509.

'has increased in population since 1672 from over 100,000 to less than 700,000. 'That does not look,' he says, 'like a Church which has failed in its mission.'* But, under favourable circumstances, population will double itself every twenty years.† So that the increase in the population of the Irish Church, of which the Archbishop of Armagh is so proud, falls considerably short of what we might have expected from the ordinary process of nature; and this can only be accounted for on the supposition that the Roman Catholics, fettered and persecuted as they have been, have gained largely in the warfare with Irish Protestantism.

'Protestantism' (says Dr. Brady), 'so far from making progress in Ireland, has actually lost ground, and failed to maintain the relative position towards Romanism which it once occupied. For although the Protestants in 1672 numbered 300,000 and the Roman Catholics 800,000, according to the enumeration of Sir W. Petty, at the last census in 1861 there were found in Ireland only 1,293,702 of Protestants of all denominations to 4,505,265 of Roman Catholics. So that within a period of 192 years there has been a relative decrease of Protestants, as compared with Roman Catholics, amounting to the large number of 395,772 persons.'

In this comparison Dr. Brady has very slightly *under-estimated* the relative decrease in the number of Protestants by counting the Jews as Protestants. His calculation, moreover, takes no account of the millions of Roman Catholics whom oppression, and poverty, and despair have driven from their native

* Speech on the Suspensory Bill.

† Morrison, *On Labour and Capital*, p. 52. A thoughtful book, which deserves to be better known than it is.

land, to say nothing of the butcheries which now and then decimated them at home. From 1806 to 1867 alone four millions and a half of Irish Roman Catholics have emigrated to America. In fact, the Irish population of America is at this moment, I believe, considerably larger than the Irish population of the United Kingdom; and every Irishman in America nourishes an undying hate to England. This is a serious matter; and the danger would soon be realised in the event of a war between England and one of the great Powers. In itself Fenianism may be contemptible enough; but it is formidable while it has a secure foothold in the sympathies of the great bulk of the Irish population. Pacify Ireland, and you may then safely leave the discomfiture of Fenianism to the artillery of *Punch*.

I observe that the Archbishop of Dublin, in the charge which he has just delivered, has hazarded a new argument in explanation of the numerical inferiority of the Irish Protestants; and a very extraordinary argument it is. 'He did not desire to revive the memory of bygone persecution of the Protestant population; but when they were taunted with their fewness, he could not help remarking that the number of Protestants who were massacred by the Roman Catholics during the rebellion was, by the most moderate estimate, set down at 40,000, which, according to the rate of increase of the population in Ireland, would now have more than quadrupled.' *

Now, in the first place, the Archbishop's argument

* *Guardian*, September 9, 1868.

omits the fact that there has been a steady decrease of Protestants, as compared with Roman Catholics, since 1672. From that date there has been no massacre of Protestants; on the contrary, the members of the Established Church have been pampered with State favours and privileges to satiety, while the Roman Catholics have at various times been slaughtered by thousands, and every obstacle that a malignant ingenuity could invent placed in the way of their increase. In the second place, his Grace is not accurate in his figures. He mentions 40,000 as the 'most moderate estimate' of the Protestants massacred in the Rebellion of 1641. On the contrary, 'the most moderate estimate,' and the one preferred by Hallam, is that of Warner, who 'scrutinised the examinations of witnesses, taken before a Commission appointed in 1643.' Warner 'thinks *twelve thousand lives of Protestants the utmost that can* be allowed for the direct or indirect effects of the rebellion,'* '*and of these only one-third by murder*'—the remainder being credited to the fortunes of war during a space of two years.† In the third place, Dr.

* *History of Irish Rebellion*, p. 397.

† 'Indeed I have my opinion on that fact of history, which I have often delivered to you, to every one I have conversed with on the subject, and which I mean still to deliver whenever the occasion calls for it; which is—that the Irish rebellion of 1641 was not only (as some silly things called 'histories' call it) not utterly *unprovoked*, but that no history I have ever read furnishes an instance of any that was *so provoked*; and that, in almost all parts of it, it has been extremely and most absurdly misrepresented. I assure you I am not single in that opinion. Several now living think so. The late Mr. Yorke thought so, and expressed himself so in debate in the

Trench takes no account of the terrible retribution—one of the most awful in history—which England exacted for the Rebellion of 1641. Sir W. Petty, who reckons the total Protestant loss from the massacre of 1641, and the war which ensued, at 37,000, calculates that above 500,000 Irish Roman Catholics 'perished and were wasted by the sword, plague, famine, hardship, and banishment, between the 23rd day of October, 1641, and the same day, 1652.'* To those who have read Prendergast's 'Cromwellian Settlement of Ireland' this will not seem an exaggerated estimate. Cromwell's policy was one of ruthless extermination. Having drenched the soil of Ireland with Roman Catholic blood, he issued a summary decree that all the Irish Roman Catholics should, by a certain date, migrate across the Shannon, and settle in the barren wilds of Connaught; and any of them who should venture to recross the Shannon were to be shot down like wolves by any Protestants who saw them. The details of the barbarities perpetrated by the English troops in carrying out this wholesale transportation of a nation cannot be read even now without a feeling of mingled pity

House of Commons, as well as to myself in conversation.' 'Letter of Mr. Burke to the Bishop of Chester:' *Correspondence*, vol. i. p. 337. Elsewhere he dismisses a reference to the received accounts of the massacres of 1641 by the remark: 'I am no believer in malignant fables.' Mr. Burke expressed this very decided opinion after a careful examination of all the evidence existing on the subject; and I suppose it will be generally admitted that he has never been surpassed in the power of sifting evidence, or in conscientious allegiance to truth. The italics in this extract are Mr. Burke's.

* *Political Anatomy of Ireland*, c. i.

and horror. They died in heaps on their way to the penal settlement which was assigned to them. The noble and the peasant, the high-born lady and the humblest of her dependants were involved alike in this carnival of indiscriminate atrocities. And then "the place" in which the survivors were immured—what a contrast to the green fields and pleasant homes, now the heritage of strangers, from which they had been driven forth like cattle to the shambles! A coast beaten by the tempests and infested by the fogs of the inhospitable Atlantic—a soil wild and waste which would require years of labour to reduce it to cultivation—such was Connaught when the Catholic population of Ireland were deported thither. 'To hell or Connaught!' This, in the proverbial language of the time, was the only alternative which the persecuted Irish Catholic had before him. What wonder that starvation and disease claimed daily, for a time, their hecatomb of victims! Clarendon says, 'I have no doubt, with sober truth, that sufferings so great and so various were never inflicted on any nation since the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus.'

I doubt, then, whether Archbishop Trench is wise in reviving these comparisons. Taking his own estimate of the Protestants killed in 1641, exaggerated as it is, and accepting his calculation of the rate of increase, the difference that it would make to the adherents of the Established Church would be only 160,000. But, according to Sir W. Petty, the Catholics lost 500,000 during the same period. In order,

however, to give every advantage to the Established Church, let us suppose that Sir W. Petty included in that estimate (though, I think, his words imply the contrary) the 37,000 which he gives as the Protestant loss; even then we should have an addition of 1,852,000 to the present Catholic population of Ireland as against the additional 160,000 which Archbishop Trench claims for the Protestants—of all denominations, be it remembered, and not simply the members of the Established Church. The Archbishop of Dublin is too candid a man not to see, on reflection, that he has, in his desperation, started an argument which recoils with crushing effect on the cause which he defends. He asks, with reference to the proposed disestablishment of the Irish Church, 'Will our brethren in the North ever forget the humiliation which their religion will receive?'* And yet he thinks the Roman Catholics of Ireland very unreasonable in not 'forgetting the humiliation which *their* religion received.' For

* A correspondent in the *Daily News* of September 15, gives his Grace's words as follows:—

'Our brethren in the North would not be allowed to forget, even if they should be willing to do so, the humiliation which their church would have received. They had their faults; but one thing could not be denied of them, namely—that they were a strong race—an imperial race, a great modern writer had called them—with the faults very likely, but also with the virtues, the spirit, the courage, and the self-reliance of such a race; men, therefore, good to have for friends—not good to have for anything else but friends.'

I must say I am surprised that a divine of Dr. Trench's high character and responsible position should have been betrayed into the use of language which *seems* to encourage a certain class of Her Majesty's subjects to set themselves against the law.

my part, I see no humiliation to the religion of the Ulster Protestants in placing them on an equality with the vast majority of the Irish people; but I do see a great humiliation to the Roman Catholics in the establishment over them of a religion to which they justly attribute all the misery and degradation which they have endured for centuries, and which is still the religion of a small minority. Up to the time of George II. the Roman Catholics of Ireland were habitually designated in State papers and legislative enactments as 'the common enemy.' Is it to be wondered at that they sometimes accepted the position which the blundering malice of Protestantism assigned to them? In the apology which the Archbishop of Dublin offers proleptically for the presumed disloyalty of the Protestants of Ulster I see at once the justification of Roman Catholic disaffection and one of the strongest arguments for the disestablishment of the Irish Church. It is more reasonable to recover the loyalty of nearly 5,000,000 by an act of justice than to retain the loyalty of 700,000 by the continuance of a palpable injustice. I have, however, a better opinion of the Protestants of Ulster than the Archbishop of Dublin seems to have. They will, no doubt, fight gallantly while the contest lasts; but when the din and dust of battle are past they will recognise the justice of Mr. Gladstone's policy. They will see that the policy, hitherto pursued, of forcing the Irish people to be happy and loyal citizens according to Protestant notions of happiness has utterly failed; and they will own the prudence of trying the opposite

policy of conciliation and fair dealing. Having failed to tear the cloak of Popery off the Irish people by the rude blasts of persecution, they will see nothing 'humiliating' in being asked to try the opposite policy of so warming the Roman Catholic with kindness, that, like the traveller in the fable, he will be glad, of his own accord, to cast off the mantle which the buffets of the north wind made him wrap all the more tightly round him.

No one appreciates these considerations more keenly, or can draw from them right conclusions more readily, than the Marquis of Salisbury the moment he emancipates his clear and vigorous intelligence from the darkening films of party traditions. The policy enunciated in his statesmanlike speeches on India is identical, *mutatis mutandis*, with Mr. Gladstone's policy for Ireland; and I do not resign the hope that he will be found next year giving to that policy the weight of his character and the aid of his great abilities. After showing, in his speech on Mysore, that the natives of India preferred their own customs, laws, and rulers, he said,

'This may show exceedingly bad taste on the part of the natives; but it is for us to consider what promotes their happiness, suits their tastes, and tends to their moral development *in their own way*. And if we endeavour merely to develop their moral nature after the fashion of the Anglo-Saxon race, the result will be conspicuous and disastrous failure.'

Lord Salisbury was here arguing against the official ascendancy of the British connection in India. Is the Protestant ascendancy in Ireland more justifi-

able or more politic? On the contrary, has not the 'endeavour' of England 'to develop the moral nature' of the Irish 'after the fashion of the Anglo-Saxon race' resulted in the very evil which Lord Salisbury predicted in the case of India—'conspicuous and disastrous failure?'

But it is said that the disestablishment of the Irish Church will endanger the Establishment in England. That I hold to be an argument altogether irrelevant. We have no right to uphold an admitted wrong on the ground that it helps to buttress something else which we believe to be good. If the Irish Established Church is justifiable on its own merits, let it be defended on that, the only legitimate, ground; but away with the monstrous argument, that we are to support it, not because it is good in itself, but in view of some possible evil consequences that may accrue to the Church of England. I have more faith in the Church of England than to believe that her foundations rest on political injustice; and they are her worst enemies who insist on linking her fortunes in indissoluble connection with those of the Irish Establishment. I have always understood that a body is placed in safety, not in jeopardy, by the excision of a limb in which mortification has clearly supervened; and I have high authority for thinking that 'every branch that beareth not fruit' is righteously 'taken away' from the 'true vine.' Well may England say of the Irish Church: 'Judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. I fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and also made a winepress therein.

What could have been done to my vineyard that I have not done in it? Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes? And now I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof.'

Another argument, and perhaps the most telling of all, is that which urges that the disestablishment of the Irish Church will divorce 'the principle of religion from the exercise of authority in England.'* No one knows better than the present Prime Minister that this argument is a stale anachronism when applied to the England of the present day. In a speech which he delivered in the House of Commons, May 11, 1845, he declared himself as follows:—

'There *was* a constitution in Church and State not only in principle, but rigidly adhered to. What do we now see? You have no longer in this country your boasted union of Church and State.† You may proclaim it still; you may make speeches to prove that the union is as strong as ever; you may toast it at your public dinners. But I tell you that the constitution in Church and State no longer exists. . . You find your Erastian system crumbling under your feet. Will

* Mr. Disraeli's Speech at Merchant Taylors' Company, June 17, 1868.

† In the same year, he said sarcastically of the Church of *England*, 'An exclusive priesthood has been christened a national church.' And with respect to the Established Church of Ireland he said, 'Religious liberty was perhaps acceptable, though it took the shape of a discipline which at once anathematised a great portion of the nation, *and virtually establishing Puritanism in Ireland, laid the foundation of those mischiefs which are now endangering the empire.*' I hope the Orangemen of Ireland are satisfied with the assurance that Mr. Disraeli still adheres to these sentiments 'in his historical conscience.'

you adopt a pantheistic principle? I have unfaltering confidence in the stability of our Church; *but I think that the real source of the danger which threatens it is its connection with the State* which places it under the control of a House of Commons that is not necessarily of its communion. *Leave the Church to herself,* and she will shrink from no contest, however severe. I believe in Ireland itself, if the question be, Will you sever the Church from the State; or will you endow the Roman Catholic Church?—for my own part I believe the Protestants of Ireland would say, "Sever the connection between the Church and the State, and don't endow the Roman Catholics."'

Mr. Disraeli still 'believes in his historical conscience that these sentiments are true.'* Yet this consistent gentleman stands up, a target for his own satire, and 'makes speeches to prove that the Union of Church and State is as strong as ever,' and 'toasts it at public dinners.' He appeals to the country 'to decide whether it will destroy or uphold its venerable constitution,' that 'boasted constitution in Church and State,' which 'no longer exists,' if Mr. Disraeli's 'historical conscience' is to be relied on. It is no doubt very convenient for the Right Honourable Gentleman to have two consciences—an 'historical conscience' for the Radicals and an unhistorical conscience for the Tories. What wonderful feats the unhistorical conscience is capable of achieving the Edinburgh Speech bears record; and one can fancy the suppressed glee of ironical enjoyment with which the 'historical conscience' was listening on that occasion to the flowing fictions of its unhistorical twin-

* Speech on Mr. Maguire's Motion.

brother. But useful as these twin consciences may be to their happy owner, they are somewhat perplexing to the general public. For instance, the 'historical conscience' cries, 'Sever the connection between the Church and the State;' while the unhistorical conscience stigmatises such a mild disestablishment as that proposed in the case of the Irish Church as 'a new system of politics opposed to religion, property, and liberty.'* It is to be hoped that the two consciences will reconcile their differences and agree on some one consistent policy before the general election, or at least that their protean owner will tell the electors which of his two consciences he wishes them to vote for. It would be unfortunate if the unhistorical conscience found itself turned out of office by the supporters of its historical brother.

For my part, I entirely agree with Mr. Disraeli's 'historical conscience' in the opinion, that 'the constitution in Church and State no longer exists.' When you apply the ancient theory of Church and State to the present condition of the British empire, you find yourself landed in one of the wildest of wild paralogisms. When Mr. Disraeli tells us that the disestablishment of the Irish Church will divorce 'the principle of religion from the exercise of authority in England,' I should like to ask him what he means by England. Does he mean simply this island which we inhabit? He cannot mean that, since it would reduce his language to sheer nonsense while the English Church in this country remains united

* Speech at the Merchant Taylors' Banquet.

with the State. He clearly means that the disestablishment of the Irish Church would be equivalent to the separation of *the British Government* from 'the principle of religion.' But what are the facts? When you speak of England, you speak of an empire of such vast extent, that this small island of ours is but a tiny speck on its horizon. Australasia alone is as large as Europe. Then there is British America, and Southern Africa, and the ancient empire of the Great Moguls.

Over all these territories Queen Victoria wields an undisputed sway; they are all under her government. But in none of them is the Church of England established. Are we to conclude, therefore, that the 'exercise' of Lord Mayo's 'authority' over the Fenians is founded on 'the principle of religion,' while Sir Stafford Northcote's authority over the Hindoos is divorced from that sacred principle?*

However this may be, we have at least a right to expect some congruity in the public utterances of so aspiring a statesman as Mr. Disraeli; and I am consequently surprised to find that, in his speech to his constituents on taking office in 1866, he

* That seems to be Archdeacon Denison's opinion. 'Those who have brought forward this proposal,' he tells us, 'attempt, as far as Ireland is concerned, to separate religion from the government of the country.' (Speech in Convocation, July 2, 1868.) Therefore, according to the constitutional doctrine of the venerable Vicar of East Brent, 'religion' is 'separated from the Government of the country' throughout the British empire, Great Britain and Ireland only excepted, these being the only portions of the British empire in which there is an established religion.

made the following announcement:—'England is the metropolis of a great maritime empire, extending to the boundaries of the furthest ocean. *She is really more of an Asiatic than a European power.*' And now the same authority tells us, that if we disestablish the religion of a handful of persons who are scattered up and down the suburbs of the European 'metropolis' of this 'Asiatic power,' there being, meanwhile, no established religion at all out of the metropolis and its suburbs, we shall 'dim the splendour of the British Crown,' 'divorce the principle of religion from the exercise of authority,' and bring about a disaster more grievous than the conquest of England by a foreign army.* Mr. Disraeli has before now boasted that 'Europe is governed by Asian principles.' Certainly it must be admitted that England, at least, is at present governed by principles which have far more affinity with the tortuous suppleness of Asiatic morality than with the bluff honesty of the English character.

It would be well if those, who say that the disestablishment of the Irish Church will unchristianise the British Government, would reconcile the union of Church and State, as it now exists among us, with any consistent theory of churchmanship. The English Church is established in England and Ireland, Presbyterianism in Scotland, Roman Catholicism in Malta, and the Greek Church was established in the Ionian Islands while they were under England's pro-

* Mr. Disraeli's Speech on the Second Reading of the Suspensory Bill.

† Mr. Disraeli's Letter to the Rev. Arthur Baker.

tectorate. And what is the relation of these communions to each other? The English Church, backed by the law of the land, disowns the Established Church of Scotland, compelling her ministers to submit to reordination, i.e. to acknowledge themselves laymen, before they can officiate at her altars; the Roman Catholic Church, established in Malta, treats the English Church as the latter treats the Presbyterian; and the Church established in the Ionian Islands has no dealings with any of the rest, believing them all to be heretical. Such is the *reductio ad absurdum* in which our union of Church and State has resulted. The theory of Church and State propounded in Mr. Gladstone's treatise on the subject, I can understand and admire, and would like, if the circumstances of a sinful world permitted, to see realised. But the theory of Church and State now preached by his censors is simply the negation of all churchmanship—nay, of all religion. It is founded, as Mr. Disraeli most truly declared 'in his historical conscience,' on 'the pantheistic principle;' and pantheism is simply atheism in a poetical vesture. Let us hear what two great authorities in Convocation have to say on the subject:—

'What has been the principle of this country' (asks Mr. Joyce)* 'as regards the connection of the State with religion? In the Ionian Islands the State was connected with the Greek Church; in Malta the State has been connected with the Roman Catholic Church; in Scotland the State has been connected with the Presbyterian Church; in Ireland the State has been connected with the Church of England. I

* Speech in Convocation, July 2, 1868.

am not going further into this question at present; but I protest, in the name of religion, and of all that is worthy of man, against disconnecting the civil government *with religion of some sort.*'

'Now what does disestablishment amount to?' (asks the valorous Archdeacon of Taunton).* 'It amounts to this, that the governing body of the nation shall have no faith. *It is not a question of having a preference for this or that Church, but of having no faith at all.*' *

It is a pity the early martyrs were not acquainted with this theory of Conservative churchmanship. It would have saved them a world of trouble and suffering; and it would, in addition, have saved the Parliament and Convocation of England the necessity of discussing any theories of Christianity, since there would be no Christianity to discuss. For if there is one thing certain in history, it is that the Christian Church made its way in the world by asserting to the death its essential and eternal oneness against the manifold forms of opposing error. It was not for 'a religion of some sort,' not for 'this or that church,' that 'the noble army of martyrs' braved the fangs of wild beasts and the more cruel tortures of their fellow-men. Rome would gladly have given the Founder of our faith a niche and an altar in her pantheon, and granted the fullest toleration to his followers. In fact, one of the Roman emperors had in his library a bust of our Saviour, to which he did homage. But it was not a question of toleration, but of life and

* Speech in Convocation, July 2, 1868. 'It might just as well be heathen, because *there is no proposition to turn the Establishment over to any other religious body.*'

death to the one side or the other; and both sides knew and recognised the fact. Christianity, while taking up into itself all that was good and true in the religions of the world, and transfiguring it with a new life and an unwonted glory, proclaimed at the same time a war of extermination, but with spiritual weapons, against all religious systems which refused to pass as proselytes through its portals.* We know how the lion-hearted Athanasius answered when the State, in the person of Constantine, offered to establish the Creed of Nicæa as 'a religion of some sort.' The great confessor would have suffered a thousand deaths sooner than have his religion degraded by consenting to its establishment on a coordinate footing with that of Arius, and so admitting the question between Christianity and Arianism to be, what Con-

* 'Why was the Gospel the object of persecution in early times? Was it because of the bigotry and exclusiveness of the statesmanship of the day, or of the mythology to which it gave its countenance? No; but because of its own exclusiveness. That which is the truth teaches the doctrine of love to all persons; but by virtue of that love it teaches also to hate the errors which mislead, and the delusions which blind them. The truth, therefore, is necessarily exclusive of its opposites; and to propose a peace between them is simply a disguised mode of proposing to truth suicide, and obtaining for falsehood victory. For truth itself, when not held as truth, but as a mere prize in the lottery of opinions, loses its virtue; that, namely, of uniting us to its fountain; since it is not by any mere abstraction, whether false or true, that we are to be healed, but by being placed in vital union, through the medium of His truth and His grace, with the Source of healing.' *Remarks on the Royal Supremacy*, p. 81. By the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone. I believe that the Church is safer in the hands of the Statesman who takes this view of her position, than in the hands of those who uphold her as 'a religion of some sort.'

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stantine asserted, a mere logomachy. I would far rather the Church of England were disestablished to-morrow than see it established as 'a religion of some sort.' A government which would unite itself with 'this or that church,' as Archdeacon Denison expresses it, or with 'a religion of some sort,' according to the phraseology of Mr. Joyce, would be a government indifferent to religious truth altogether, and would truly realise the Archdeacon's picture of a State 'having no faith at all.' But argument is thrown away on Archdeacon Denison. His faith in his own personal infallibility is as firm and fervent as Dr. Ward's in the personal infallibility of the Pope. The tone of calm superiority which pervades the 'allocutions' that he is now delivering all over the country in his capacity of stump orator for the Government is really amusing. But, alas! even popes have been known to contradict themselves; one anathematised Arianism and then embraced it; and Dr. Ward holds that he was infallible alike in his profession of Arianism and in his anathema against it. And so it is with the Venerable Archdeacon of Taunton. In the year of grace, 1865, a letter appeared in the Tory newspapers, dated 'East Brent, June 3,' and signed 'George A. Denison.' 'Mr. Gladstone,' said that letter, 'is not satisfied with a "lateral extension" of the franchise. He wants a "downward" extension. Mr. Gladstone tells the working men of Chester that what is wanted is, that "the voices of the working men be more truly and freely heard in Parliament." Let no elector deceive himself. If he polls—and

men who do not poll are poor creatures—he polls for democracy or against democracy. It is idle, or worse, to attempt to put any other colour upon the election (for Oxford University). It is time that any elector who is hesitating, and does not love democracy, to make up (*sic*) his mind.'

Well, Mr. Gladstone was turned out of Oxford, and his successor became a prominent member of a Government which passed a Reform Bill in which 'lateral extension' of the franchise was cast to the wind, and a 'downward extension' with a vengeance took its place. Did Archdeacon Denison denounce the man who had supplanted Mr. Gladstone at Oxford on the ground of being opposed to 'a downward extension' of the franchise, and then suddenly faced about and supported with voice and vote Mr. Bright's much abused Household Suffrage Bill? On the contrary, Archdeacon Denison now 'preaches the faith which once he destroyed,' and claims to be equally infallible as a persecutor and a believer. At the Bristol banquet to Her Majesty's Ministers, January 28, 1868, he is reported to have spoken as follows of the Reform Bill and its authors:—

'It was just because he saw in the Reform Bill of 1867 that affinity between reform in things temporal and spiritual which he had looked for in vain in any other of the Reform Bills of which they had seen so much; and it was because the Bill of 1867 had gone back to the old system of things in England that he welcomed it. There were, however, some things in it that he should like to see different. He did not like representation by minorities—he saw no principle in it; and he should very much like to see household

suffrage carried into the counties, and he hoped to live to see it done. He was very thankful—and what old Tory was not?—for what they had got; he said, and he was sure he might say it on behalf of that great company, that they would do their utmost to support the men who had carried the Reform Bill. And he said this again, that if English gentlemen, whether bishops, or clergymen, or people, could not hold their own under the Reform Bill of 1867, with the good will of all the other electors, then he was very sorry for those English gentlemen, and it was their own fault.'

Now I should never dream of finding fault with any man for changing his opinion on any political subject if he sees good reason for the change. But what I cannot stomach is the spectacle of a man cursing and swearing at Mr. Gladstone in 1865 for advocating 'a downward extension' of the franchise, and then standing up in 1868 'as an old Tory,' spouting the stolen doctrines of Mr. Bright, and still cursing Mr. Gladstone, and challenging our admiration of his own consistency! It reminds me of a story which I lately read in a book of travels. An African chief had picked up some articles of European clothing, and wishing to make an impression on his English visitors, he appeared before them with his legs through the sleeves of a coat, the tail of which was tied round his loins, and his arms through the legs of a pair of trousers which was buttoned round his neck. Equally grotesque is the figure of Archdeacon Denison strutting through the country, 'as an old Tory,' in the garments of Radicalism put on topsy-turvy. Whatever he may think himself of such an exhibition, there are not a few who believe that such

coarse ribaldry as the *Globe* has reported him to have lately indulged in at Chew Magna is likely to do far more harm to the Church of England than the disestablishment of the Irish Church. It would be unfair, however, to forget that Mr. Disraeli has been 'educating his party,' or to deny to Archdeacon Denison the credit of being one of Mr. Disraeli's aptest pupils. In his speech on Mr. Maguire's motion, March 15, 1868, Mr. Disraeli candidly admitted that, in defending an Established Church, he did not mean any church in particular, and, to make his meaning more clear, he ventured on a definition. 'A church,' he said, 'an ecclesiastical endowment—a church, *whatever its character*; for when I use the word "church," I speak not only of the Church of this country, or even of the Roman Catholic Church, *but of every religious body of men who have an organisation*—such a church,' Mr. Disraeli desired to see established because it 'steadied faith.' So when we hear Archdeacon Denison contending for the establishment of 'this or that church,' or advocating the policy of 'turning the establishment over to some other religious body' in preference to Mr. Gladstone's scheme, we recognise at a glance the Gamaliel at whose feet the High Church Vicar of East Brent has been imbibing his latitudinarian doctrines. By and bye, Mr. Disraeli will attempt to outbid Mr. Gladstone by offering to the Liberationists a more sweeping measure than that proposed by the Opposition leader, and then Archdeacon Denison will suddenly discover in Mr. Disraeli's Spoliation Bill 'that affinity between

reform in things temporal and spiritual which he had looked for in vain' in Mr. Gladstone's generous policy. I have no doubt that the Archdeacon loves the Church of England well; but he seems intent on persuading us that he loves the Tory party a good deal better.

In truth, the only logical theory of Church and State is the one so elaborately argued out in Mr. Gladstone's book, namely, 'that the State should act upon the rule of exclusive support to the Church, with simple toleration to other forms of religion.' To invade that theory in favour of indiscriminate religious establishments is to destroy it altogether. There was a time, indeed, when it was a rule of English policy that the banner of the Cross should be planted wherever the flag of England was seen waving, and that that banner should be borne, as far at least as the State was concerned, by the Church of England alone. But that policy has been abandoned long ago as impracticable. We have no longer any theory of Church and State which will bear examination; and it is much wiser and honester to confess as much. It is absurd to rely on *a priori* reasoning, and to argue on the basis of a state of things which, whatever its merits or demerits, has irrevocably passed away. The axe is already laid at the root of the Irish Church Establishment, and if it should happen to crush the English Establishment in its fall, the latter will have to thank the mistaken friends* who

* In his Speech on the Second Reading of the Suspensory Bill, May 22, Mr. Gladstone strongly deprecated this policy of linking

dragged it for protection under the shadow of a tree which is about to be righteously 'cut down' because 'it beareth not good fruit.' But whether the Church Establishment in England stand or fall—and I believe that it will stand all the more firmly when disencumbered of such an incubus as the Irish Establishment—one thing is clear: it will have to defend its position by the exhibition of good fruits, and not by any abstract theory of Church and State. The days of abstract reasoning in matters of practical government are gone, and our regrets are as vain as Burke's valediction to the spirit of chivalry. Different ages have their own special characteristics, and the distinguishing feature of the age in which we live is the determination to try all institutions by the test of utility. Institutions which cannot stand that test must fall. It is easy to give nicknames, and to say that the spirit of the age is 'utilitarian,' and ought to be opposed; but, for my part, I believe that there is a sense in which it is true that utility is the test of national institutions, and of an Established Church among the rest. The use of a National Church is to administer the rites of our faith to the individual members of the nation, and to bring them all up in right principles of faith and morals. But a National Church which has the bulk of the nation outside of it

together the fate of the English and Irish Church Establishments. 'Take care, I beseech you,' he said, 'lest by persistently declaring these things to be truths, you make them truths; and by your own imprudence induce consequences that we have never intended, and that we profoundly deprecate.'

is a misnomer. It does not fulfil the end for which alone it was established, and it has no right to complain if the sentence goes forth: 'Take away her battlements, for they are not the Lord's.' Archdeacon Denison tells us, that if the Irish Church is disestablished, 'the governing body of the nation will have no faith at all.' But the simple fact is, that 'the governing body of the nation' need have 'no faith at all' even now. The Prime Minister may be a Jew, or a Unitarian, or a Comtist, and his cabinet may represent as many 'phases of faith' as there are members. Yet a government of this piebald complexion would be 'Christian' in the estimation of some persons, provided 'a religion of some sort' were established in the land; while a Government, every member of which was a sincere Churchman, would be unchristian, or even antichristian, if 'a religion of some sort' were not established in Ireland! The Irish Church must indeed be *in extremis* when its defenders are constrained to take refuge in such an abyss of absurdity as this. Perish ecclesiastical establishments! rather than that the Church of England should barter her spiritual birthright for the Erastian 'potage of lentils' with which some Tory High Churchmen would tempt us.

But it is said, and the argument did yeoman's service in the House of Lords, that if you disestablish the Irish Church you will alienate the loyalty of the Protestant population. The same argument was used fifteen years ago with regard to the Canada Clergy Reserves Bill. In a long speech against that

Bill on March 4, 1853, Sir John Pakington complained that the English Government had

'Outraged the feelings of the Protestants of Upper Canada by uniting them with a province (Lower Canada) widely differing from them in laws, in language, and religion.* That was the first blow to the loyal feeling of Upper Canada. . . . With a feeling of anxiety and sadness he would ask the noble lord (Lord John Russell) to consider whether it was wise or prudent to wound still further the feelings of this loyal population? Was the noble lord prepared, in disregard of solemn obligations, in disregard of national faith, to assail the religion which they loved by depriving it of the support which had been solemnly guaranteed to it?'

'By this act of confiscation' (said Lord John Manners in the same debate) 'they would involve the two provinces in a war of religious opinion, embittered and exasperated as that war would necessarily be by the risks the people of Upper Canada would have to run, and the injury, injustice, and wrong which would be perpetrated upon them; and all these evils were to be inflicted upon the colonies in the name of religious equality, and out of regard for the rights of the colonial legislature. Better far than this, he would say, recall your governor-general, call back your army, call home your fleet, and let Canada, if she be so minded, establish her independence, and cast off her character as a colony, or seek refuge in the extended arms of the United States.'

* Compare the language of the Archbishop of Armagh in the debate on the Suspensory Bill: 'Our great sin in Ireland is that we are with yourselves one blood, one religion, one language; and it is on this very account that we are singled out and assailed.' Is it not marvellous that the Archbishop does not see that a church which has been three hundred years established in Ireland, and is still different in blood, in religion, and in language from the natives, is most justly 'singled out and assailed?'

According to the report, these sentiments were loudly cheered by the Conservative party.

It is worth while to quote, on the other side, the sensible opinion of a gentleman who is now a member of Mr. Disraeli's Government, Mr. Adderley, who

'Contended that the Canadians were entitled to parity of rights with the people of the British Islands, in having the uncontrolled disposal of their own funds, and especially those intended for the support of religion. The breach of faith and violation of principle would lie in the rejection or delay of the measure, not in its passing. Nothing could be more beneficial to the Church of England in Canada than to get rid of an odious, noxious, and unprofitable claim, or to teach it to look to a support less treacherous and inefficient than the Imperial Parliament.'

Mr. Gladstone in his exhaustive speech on that occasion, referred as follows to Sir John Pakington's 'loyalty' argument:—

'I lamented nothing more in the speech of the Right Honourable Gentleman the Member for Droitwich than one part in which I heard him say that he appealed to one part of the population of Canada. *It is high time to have done appealing to one part of the people.* We know of old the meaning of these words; we know from disastrous experience their effects; we know that the effect of them was to create knots and cliques of intriguers, who put upon themselves the profession of British supporters, who denied the name of loyalists to all who would not adopt their shibboleth, and caused a strong reaction in the minds of the colonial population. So that if under that system of government you hope to govern the people of Canada, you must expect the spread, if not of disloyalty, yet of dissatisfaction and dissent; and that pervading the great mass of the community there will be a current of public opinion throughout

the colony, if not contrary to, yet distinct from, the current of British feeling.'

He concluded with the advice:—

'Be just and fear not. We shall not refrain from doing a thing that is in itself just and right, because we may fear that evil may come of it.'

And now who have turned out the true prophets? the 192 Conservatives who went into the lobby with Mr. Disraeli? or the 275 Liberals, including 18 Conservatives, who followed Mr. Gladstone? The answer is, that of all our colonies Canada is now the most enthusiastic in its loyalty to the mother country. Religious equality, so far from 'involving the two provinces in a war of religious opinion, embittered and exasperated,' has had precisely the contrary effect. And so it will be in Ireland. After the first ebullition of annoyance is over on the part of the Protestants, they will take a sober practical view of the question (for they are a sensible people), and in a few years we shall have in Ireland, what we have now in Canada, a united and contented people, with no party distinguished by its loyalty because all will be equally loyal. I have never heard that the supremacy of the Crown has been weakened, or its 'splendour dimmed' by the act of justice done to Canada; and why should we expect a different result in Ireland? Those who were rebel leaders in Ireland became loyal leaders in Canada, because, in the latter country, they found themselves on a footing of religious equality with their fellow-citizens. Under similar circum-

stances would they not have been equally loyal in Ireland? Who can doubt it? Our unjust and cruel treatment of the Roman Catholic population of Ireland made them disloyal, and then we urged their disloyalty as a reason for perpetuating the injustice. Macaulay has exposed this vicious reasoning so well, in his essay on the Jewish Disabilities, that I cannot do better than quote his words:—

'The feeling of patriotism, when society is in a healthful state, springs up by a natural and inevitable association, in the minds of citizens who know that they owe all their comforts and pleasures to the bond which unites them in one community. But, under a partial and oppressive government, these associations cannot acquire that strength which they have in a better state of things. Men are compelled to seek from their party that protection which they ought to receive from their country, and they, by a natural consequence, transfer to their party that affection which they would otherwise have felt for their country. The Huguenots of France called in the help of England against their Catholic kings. The Catholics of France called in the help of Spain against a Huguenot king. Would it be fair to infer that at present the French Protestants would wish to see their religion made dominant by the help of a Prussian or English army? Surely not. And why is it that they are not willing, as they formerly were willing, to sacrifice the interests of their country to the interests of their religious persuasion? The reason is obvious: they were persecuted then, and are not persecuted now. The English Puritans, under Charles I., prevailed on the Scotch to invade England. Do the Protestant Dissenters of our time wish to see the Church put down by an invasion of foreign Calvinists? If not, to what cause are we to attribute the change? Surely to this, that the Protestant Dissenters are far better treated now than in the seventeenth century. Some of the most

illustrious public men that England ever produced were inclined to take refuge from the tyranny of Laud in North America. Was this because Presbyterians and Independents are incapable of loving their country? But it is idle to multiply instances. Nothing is so offensive to a man who knows any thing of history or of human nature as to hear those who exercise the powers of government accuse any sect of foreign attachments. If there be any proposition universally true in politics it is this, that foreign attachments are the fruit of domestic misrule. It has always been the trick of bigots to make their subjects miserable at home, and then to complain that they look for relief abroad; to divide society, and to wonder that it is not united; to govern as if a section of the state were the whole, and to censure the other sections of the state for their want of patriotic spirit. If the Jews have not felt towards England like children, it is because she has treated them like a stepmother. There is no feeling which more certainly developes itself in the minds of men living under tolerably good government than the feeling of patriotism. Since the beginning of the world, there never was any nation, or any large portion of any nation, not cruelly oppressed, which was wholly destitute of that feeling. To make it therefore ground of accusation against a class of men, that they are not patriotic, is the most vulgar legerdemain of sophistry. It is the logic which the wolf employs against the lamb. It is to accuse the mouth of the stream of poisoning the source.'

This admirable passage explains fully the disloyalty of the Irish people. As a matter of fact, the Irish have become more loyal to England just in proportion to the degree of justice which England has accorded to them; and there cannot be a reasonable doubt that Mr. Gladstone's policy, *if carried out in time*, will close the wounds inflicted on Ireland by centuries of

English misrule, and enable us to say with truth, what we can now say merely as a constitutional fiction, that there is indeed a *United* Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

I must advert for a moment to an argument used by the Archbishop of Armagh in the House of Lords, and repeated by the Archbishop of Dublin and others:—

'The 700,000 churchmen of Ireland' (said his Grace) 'contain within themselves the most enterprising and intellectual portion of the nation. The great majority of the landed proprietors, the merchants and skilled artizans, belong to the Established Church.'

In other words, England robbed the Catholics of Ireland of their property, and closed against them all the avenues of knowledge, and shut them out from every honourable enterprise; and because this barbarous policy has borne some fruit, though less than it would have borne among a people less buoyant than the Irish, the two Primates of Ireland adduce that fruit as a reason for perpetuating our injustice. We did our best to degrade the Irish, and when we have in some degree succeeded, we cry out, 'See how degraded they are compared with the Protestants.'*

* The *Standard* newspaper actually thinks that it is strengthening the defence of the Irish Church by the following argument:—'Of peasants, tailors, labourers, publicans, food growers, and manufacturers, 80 or 90 per cent. are Roman Catholics. But the bankers and men of business, the barristers and doctors, the servants of the Government, the men of science, the cotton and linen manufacturers—the men whose occupations rank them as gentlemen, and require them to be men of intellect and education—are Protestants

The friends of the Irish Church are not very particular as to the consistency of their reasoning. At one time they tell us that the Irish Establishment is no grievance to the mass of the people because the bulk of the land belongs to Protestant proprietors. At another time they conjure up harrowing pictures of the pitiable condition in which the Irish Protestants who live in rural districts will be placed if you disestablish their Church. Now it is a sound rule in logic that you cannot take just as much of an argument as suits your purpose: you must leave it alone, or take it entirely. The would-be friends of the Irish Church must therefore choose which of the above arguments they will emblazon on their banner; for,

in chief proportion. The land is owned by Protestants. The higher classes, the intelligent classes, those without whom the community would sink back into barbarism, and grovel in one dead level of ignorance and degradation, are chiefly Protestants. These are the children of the Garrison Church, and in what they are, we see what she has done for them and for Ireland. How can we say that she has failed?' If one of the notes of the Church is, that its members should consist of, and not simply include, large-acred squires and educated gentlemen, the Established Church of Ireland is certainly a perfect church; but it as certainly is not the Church of Christ and his Apostles. Our Lord affirms of Himself that He 'preached the Gospel to the poor,' and St. Paul said of the church of his day,—'Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen—yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are; that no flesh should glory in His presence.' It is evident that 'God hath' *not* 'chosen' the Irish Establishment, if the *Standard's* view of it is correct.

taken together, they destroy each other. If the Irish Protestants are so poor, how is it that they are in possession of nearly the whole land of Ireland? And if they are in possession of almost the whole of the land, how can they be so poor as to be unable to provide for the maintenance of their own religion? Or, are we really to understand that Irish Churchmen care so little for their Church as to let it perish rather than put their hands into their pockets to support it? That is the opinion of the Archbishop of Armagh. 'As to our being the church of the rich,' he said in his speech on the Suspensory Bill, 'it is true that nine-tenths of the land is held by Protestant proprietors; but where are they? In England, in France, in Italy, all over the world, anywhere but in Ireland.' And 'he was too long a beggar,' he said, 'not to know how much is to be got' from such persons for Church purposes. The invariable answer is, 'You must allow me very respectfully to decline to give anything.' That is to say, England took away the whole of the ecclesiastical property of Ireland, and what it did not secularise it gave to a handful of Protestant immigrants. It also confiscated the entire private property of the Roman Catholics and divided it among the Protestants. And it did this, and numberless other iniquities to boot, with the view of giving the Protestant garrison such an overwhelming advantage as would enable it to 'compel' the Irish 'to come into' the Establishment from 'the highways and hedges'—the only heritage which their ferocious evangelisers had left them. And now, forsooth! a holy war is

proclaimed on behalf of the Protestant Establishment in Ireland; and Protestant proprietors, who spend their Irish incomes 'anywhere but in Ireland' threaten us with an Iliad of woes if we do anything which shall compel those of them who have a sprinkling of Protestants on their properties to choose between the alternatives of giving a few crumbs from their table, or letting those Protestants go without Protestant worship. Behold the attachment to the Protestant faith which is held up for our admiration! No wonder the champions of Irish Protestantism express their fear that it will be absorbed into Roman Catholicism the moment it ceases to receive the bribe of State emoluments and dignities. A religion which can only live in the sunshine of court favour has certainly not much chance against a rival faith which has endured and prospered through all the pangs of poverty and persecution. If I were an Irish Protestant, I think I should deem it wise to find a better argument than this, or to hold my peace.

It was with extreme amazement that I read the following passage in the Archbishop of Armagh's speech on the Suspensory Bill:—

'And now, my lords, the principal reason given for the alleged failure of our mission is that we have not converted the Roman Catholics. Well, my lords, I cannot think that that was the fault of the Church in Ireland. Whatever its faults may have been, I don't think that fault lies at its doors. In every effort we made for that purpose we were thwarted by the civil Government. When the Reformation was first introduced into Ireland there was very little objection made to what was then called 'the King's proceedings.'

The chieftains and the great majority of the bishops took without scruple the Oath of Supremacy, and for a considerable time the people attended the parish churches. I believe they did so for the first 11 years of the reign of Elizabeth.

The same rosy view of the so-called Reformation in Ireland was expressed some days later by one speaker after another in the Convocation of the province of Canterbury. This delusion was perhaps excusable while Mant and King were regarded as standard authorities on the ecclesiastical history of Ireland; but learned divines should really consult the pages of Froude, and the original documents which he quotes, before repeating the exploded fiction of an Irish Reformation. *There was no such thing as regards either the clergy or laity of Ireland.* The pretty story of the Irish Episcopate, with one or two exceptions, embracing the Reformation, is just one of those pious legends which modern criticism has relegated to the realm of pure romance. Mr. Froude has called it 'the most impudent falsehood in all history;' and Dr. Maziere Brady has lately published, for the first time, some of the State Papers on which Mr. Froude's emphatic assertion is founded. And yet, in the face of these facts, the apologists of the Irish Church go on calmly reiterating the old tradition as if it had never been called in question. Dr. Lee has supplied them with a few superficial plausibilities in answer to Froude, and they are content to repeat his feeble sophistries without taking the trouble to go into the matter themselves. The documents which Dr. Brady has published prove to superfluity that, during Queen

Elizabeth's reign, the Reformation was confined to the government officials within the Pale. The Irishry beyond the Pale and the Englishry within it adhered firmly to the old Church. It is true, indeed, that the first few years of Elizabeth's reign were not marked by any violent persecution of the Catholics *as such.* Even in England such of the Roman Catholic clergy as took the oath of allegiance were allowed, without any additional test, to retain their benefices; while in Ireland the oath of supremacy itself was very generally dispensed with. The unprincipled Archbishop Loftus complained that 'there have been a great sorte admitted to benefices without taking the oathe of Her Majesty's tytle, whose names I will be ready to declare when I shalbe thereto required.' The Protestant Archbishop of Cashel (Magrath) confirms the complaint of his brother primate:—

'Forasmuch' (he says) 'as many now within the realm of Ireland, and especially in the province of Munster, as well officers and ministers of the law, head officers of towns and cities, principal lords and gentlemen, as justices of the peace and assizes, and *prelates of the Church,* are appointed and elected in their several offices and callings there, *being never sworn to the oath of Her Majesty's supremacy* [underlined in the original] according to the statute in that behalf provided, although every of them presumeth to exercise their several callings without punishment, a thing very dangerous and worthy to be looked unto, may it please your honourable lordships to grant authority to your suppliant, or to some others well affected in such a case, to take and receive the said oaths *from all manner of persons.*' *

* Dr. Brady's *State Papers,* pp. 34, 61–63.

The Archbishop goes on to say that the Pope's authority is everywhere acknowledged, and therefore his Grace calls in the secular arm in order 'that everyone being of age in the said towns shall be compelled to put in securities before the Lord Chancellor to come to church and receive the Holy Communion, *which hitherto they have refused to do.*' Again, Sir John Perrott, Lord Deputy, writes to Burleigh, in answer to a complaint of indiscretion against him, that, so far from being indiscreet, he had 'tendered the oath of supremacy only to justices of the peace and other officers, as the law in that case doth necessarily exact;' and in many cases even the justices of the peace were excused.*

Quotations might be multiplied; but these will suffice to show that, in the early part of her reign, Queen Elizabeth was willing to leave the Irish in the undisturbed enjoyment of their religion; and even the acceptance of the royal supremacy on the part of Roman Catholics by no means involved, and was not necessarily intended to involve, separation from the Church of Rome, save only on the one point of the Pope's temporal supremacy. This is the fallacy which runs through all Dr. Lee's argument. He assumes, without a particle of proof, that all who took the oath of supremacy accepted the Reformation. On the contrary, it made no difference whatever in their religious profession and practice; they remained, with hardly an exception, as they were before, Roman Catholics.

* Dr. Brady's *State Papers*, p. 101.

It was the Pope's bull, excommunicating her and absolving her subjects from their allegiance, that induced Queen Elizabeth to change her toleration into the fiercest persecution of the Roman Catholics. Then was drawn, for the first time, the fatal line which made the Irish people aliens in their own country. The Archbishop of Armagh thinks that because the Roman Catholics of Ireland were allowed to remain comparatively unmolested in the exercise of their own religion during the first eleven years of Elizabeth's reign they were therefore Protestants. Even after Elizabeth began her active persecution, her authority extended so little beyond Dublin that she was not in a position to impose either the royal supremacy, or the doctrines of the Reformation, on the Irish, who remained all the time under the authority of the Roman Catholic clergy. Now and then the Queen's troops made a raid beyond the Pale, and burnt a few Roman Catholic churches; but it need hardly be said that this system of preaching the Gospel succeeded only in making the Irish cleave more earnestly than ever to their faith. In short, there is not a scrap of evidence to show that more than three bishops at the most accepted the Reformation in Ireland.

But even if it were otherwise—even if it could be proved that every bishop in Ireland conformed to the Reformed discipline and worship, while the bulk of the clergy and the whole of the laity remained Roman Catholic, are we seriously to maintain that all the privileges and endowments of the Irish Church were justly transferred from the Irish people and clergy on

the plea that the bishops, and they only, became Reformers? That is the proposition which must be maintained by those who accept the popular fiction about the conversion of the Irish episcopate; for the merest tyro in Irish history must know that there is not the shadow of a pretence for saying that any considerable portion of the Irish people embraced the Reformation. An examination of the State Papers proves this to demonstration. Let a few examples suffice.

The Protestant Bishop of Waterford and Lismore writes to Walsingham on June 29, 1580, that in his diocese the Reformation is 'utterly abhorred; the church in time of divine service of all hands eschewed; the sacraments contemned and refused; massing in every corner; no burial of the dead according to the Book of Common Prayer, but buried in their houses with diriges, and after that cast into the ground like dogs.' In short, he declares that Popery is triumphant everywhere, while Protestantism appeared nowhere beyond his own household.*

On July 3, 1581, Lord Grey, the Lord Lieutenant, writes to Secretary Walsingham, that the Protestant Archbishop of Dublin (Loftus) is 'in a quasi imprisonment in my house,' and advises Walsingham to 'prefer him, if possible, to Ely, or some other bishopric in England,' as the Irish would not have him at any price.

An English lawyer, called Andrew Trollope, was

* *State Papers*, p. 39.

sent by Walsingham to Ireland to report on the state of affairs. His report is dated 'September 12, 1581,' and bears every mark of industry and care. Here are a few extracts from it. He 'learnt that all judges of the law, Her Majesty's chancellor and barons of the Exchequer, and counsel learned, and such as execute inferior offices (with few exceptions), were all Irishmen and Papists, *as all Irishmen be.*'

He mentions, as one of the evils of Ireland, 'the Commission of Faculties, which gives licences to some one to have three, perhaps four, benefices—*not only to spiritual but to temporal men*—and by reason thereof, though there be not many churches and fewer bells in Ireland, some of them ring, *but they neither call nor bring ministers nor parishioners to serve God.*' One of these Protestant ministers he characterises as 'a common table player and alehouse haunter, which can scarce lead the service.' And this man had 'three benefices.'

'I was certified, and I find it very likely to be true, that my Lord Bishop of Dublin is a partner in the profits of the Commission of Faculties, and anything almost will be suffered in Ireland for gain and friendship, or else the Bishop of Meath (an Irishman, and not the best subject in Ireland, ... and will seem an earnest Protestant, and yet they say cherisheth many a Papist) could not have continued one of the Council.

'My Lord Bishop of Dublin is a rather better subject. But he hath many children, and is so desirous to prefer them, that he gives marriage portions to his numerous daughters (out of the revenues of the Church), and is hard put to as regards his sons; all which have made him take up money at interest, as he did 400*l.* of Sir William Drury, and to pay

this and defray all charges and get more money for his sons and daughters, many think maketh him have a cheverelle conscience.'

This prelate was in due time appointed a lord justice in conjunction with an unprincipled layman of the name of Wallop, whose deeds are said to have originated the vulgar verb, to *wallop*. These two worthy administrators of justice manage to get an unfortunate Roman Catholic Archbishop called Hurley into their clutches, and they at once write off to Walsingham for permission to send their prisoner to London that he may be put to the torture in the Tower, as they had but a small variety of instruments of torture in Dublin Castle. They are told in reply that Dr. Hurley must not be sent to London, but must be tortured somehow in Dublin. Thereupon these model lords justices, one of them a Protestant archbishop, 'made commission to Mr. Waterhouse and Mr. Secretary Fenton to put him (Hurley) to the torture, such as your honour advised us, which was *to toāst his feēt against the fire with hot boots.*' But finding their victim proof against their cruelty, they ask leave to have him tried by courtmartial, because, in the first place, the law officers of the Crown, on being consulted, declared that there was no valid case against him ; and, secondly, 'if he should be referred to a public trial, his impudent and clamorous denial might do great harm to the ill-affected here, who in troth have no small admiration of him.' The Queen's Secretary replies, that since it seemed doubtful whether Dr. Hurley could be convicted

according to law, 'Her Majesty's pleasure is you take a shorter way with him by martial law; so as you may see it is referred to your discretion whether of these two ways your lordships will take with him.' On receipt of this discretionary power, their 'lordships' had the archbishop summarily convicted and executed. 'Wherein, as we have done but our duty (they say in their account of the matter to Walsingham), so we will not, God willing, at any time omit to perform the same, in like sort as occasion shall be offered, especially in such matters as so highly concern the glory of God and Her Majesty's crown and dignity.'

The reason which the chief actors in this shocking tragedy assign for their villany is, that it was not safe to tolerate Roman Catholic ecclesiastics in Ireland, 'considering in how little safety we live here.' A singular proof certainly of the 'welcome' which the Archbishop of Armagh assured the House of Lords, and Dr. Jebb the Lower House of Convocation, was given to the Reformation by the people of Ireland.

In a letter to Walsingham, July 8, 1585, the Archbishop of Armagh (John Long) says, 'It is a hard thing to be thought of that the land is not able to afford, of the birth of the land, *forty Christians*, which have the taste of the true service of God,' i.e. the Reformation. A few days after, John Shearman, a schoolmaster, writes to tell the Archbishop why he left Waterford. It was because he had nothing to do there, the whole population being, according to his own account, violently opposed to the Reformation

so much so, indeed, that 'the ministers be almost afeared to come near the sheepfolds.'

In a communication to Walsingham the Archbishop of Armagh had urged the necessity of compelling the Roman Catholics by pains and penalties to conform to the Reformed religion. Walsingham replies (December, 1585), and refuses to sanction the Archbishop's policy of compelling a whole nation to change its faith at the point of the sword. 'Touching the refusal of the oath of supremacy by the gentlemen of the Pale,' he says, 'which your lordship thinketh it meet to be punished with severity, the matter hath been considered here. And in respect of their rawness in religion, making the said oath a matter of conscience, it is thought not convenient they should be brought unto it by compulsion against their conscience, but even with time, by instruction and labour of those to whose charge it doth belong.' If the Reformation had made so little way among the Englishry of the Pale, that they were excused from taking the oath of supremacy, we may safely conclude without any further evidence, though further evidence exists in abundance, that there was not much likelihood of Reformation beyond the Pale. Three years previously Miles Magrath, Protestant Archbishop of Cashel, speaks in a petition to the Queen, of 'the few members of Protestants in Ireland;' and another bishop (Hugh Brady of Meath, already mentioned) wrote to Sir W. Cecil in the year 1570, recommending a lawyer of the name of Cusack for the office of chief baron of the Exchequer, on the ground that he

was 'the only man of his profession that favoureth religion (Protestant) in this land.'

In a letter to Burleigh, dated '1590, September 22,' Archbishop Loftus says, 'It is almost a bootless labour for any man to preach in the country out of Dublin, *for want of hearers.*

These quotations, and it would be easy to add to them, show that there was really no reformation at all in Ireland during Elizabeth's reign, except among a handful of government hangers-on,—men who would profess any religion that would be agreeable to those in power.

But the Archbishop of Armagh, while contending, most erroneously, as we have seen, that 'there was very little objection' to the Reformation on the part of the Irish people, boldly asserts that such failure as there was must not be laid at the door of 'the Church in Ireland.' 'Whatever its faults may have been, I don't think that fault lies at its doors. In every effort we made for that purpose (of converting the Irish) we were thwarted by the Civil Government.' The State Papers throw considerable light on this point also, as a few references will show.

Sir Edmund Waterhouse, a gentleman holding an authoritative appointment in the Government of Ireland, writing to Walsingham, June 14, 1574, says, 'Let all offices be given to soldiers of experience, and to none else. I would the Queen would also so bestow her bishoprics, for here is scarce any sign of religion, nor no room for justice *till the sword hath made a way for the law.*' 'No governour shall do

good,' said the agent sent by Walsingham to report on the state of Ireland, 'except he show himself a Tamerlane.'

Did the Protestant bishops set their faces against this policy of reforming Ireland by the policy of Tamerlane? On the contrary, they were always the instigators of this execrable system, and their thirst for persecution was occasionally so indecent as to incur the rebuke of the civil authorities. The most eminent and influential of Queen Elizabeth's Irish bishops was undoubtedly Loftus. His method of converting high dignitaries of the Roman Church from the errors of Popery we have already seen. He first grilled his victim; and, when that failed to convince him of the superior excellence of the Reformation, Loftus sent him for illumination to a better world. But in dealing with the common people the Archbishop was content to begin with fines and imprisonment; and if these failed, then followed the stricter discipline. There is a very instructive letter of his to Burleigh, dated '1590, September 22.' In that letter he laments the abolition of the Ecclesiastical Commission, which seems to have been a very effective instrument of conversion. It certainly was not calculated to win the goodwill of the Irish in favour of the Reformation; but it effectually cowed the Roman Catholics of the Pale, the only portion of Ireland where the authority of England was then firmly established. 'The people of the Pale,' says his Grace, 'were restrained by the Ecclesiastical Commission; and, howsoever they were affected inwardly

in their consciences, yet outwardly they showed great duty and obedience, in resorting to service, sermons, and in receiving the communion.' But when the heavy hand of the Commission was removed all was changed. The moment the Irish got anything like liberty of conscience they cast off the Protestant mask which they had worn under the pressure of a cruel persecution. His Grace cannot abide this. Private judgment is a most excellent thing in a Protestant; but Papists have no right to it at all, and it is a crime to let them exercise it. Under the system of partial toleration—that is, freedom from bodily punishment—which prevailed during a short interval in the reign of Elizabeth, Protestantism was at such a discount that it was 'almost a bootless labour for any man to preach in the country out of Dublin for want of hearers.' The Archbishop, however, is of opinion that

'The thing is not so far gone but it may be easily remedied *if the Ecclesiastical Commission be restored and put in use, for this people are but poor, and fear to be fined.* If liberty be left to myself and such commissioners as are well affected in religion to imprison and fine all such as are obstinate and disobedient; and if they persist, being men of ability to bear their own charges, to send them into England for example sake, I have no doubt but within a short time they will be reduced to good conformity. If it be objected that this severe course may perhaps breed some stirs, I assure your lordship there is no doubt of any such matter, for they are but beggars, and if once they perceive a thorough resolution to deal roundly with them, they will both yield and conform themselves. And this course of reformation, the sooner it is

begun the better it will prosper; and the longer it is deferred the more dangerous it will be.'

No wonder that men occupying inferior positions, like Fenton, should speak in the following fashion of a packed jury which found nineteen youths guilty of death for the crime of refusing to give up the religion of their fathers:—

'The jurors, by a secret power of God working on their conscience, proceed in the trials with great uprightness, esteeming it a singular act of piety to their country to weed out such corrupt members, *and, by their extirpation, to assure the better* THEIR OWN ESTATES.'

How instructive, too, is the following laconic despatch sent by Loftus and Wallop to the Lords of the Council in England:—

'Walter Eustace, brother to Viscount Baltinglass, was taken at last. We bribed some of his confederates to betray him, and he was brought in yesterday. He said he was a Catholic, and did what he did for God's cause and by authority from the Pope. He was executed.'

An edifying work truly for a Christian archbishop to be engaged in. Perhaps the most repulsive feature in the character of these episcopal persecutors is the loathsome *sang froid* with which they relate their own atrocities. They tell the heads of Papists they have taken with as little feeling as a sportsman counts his heads of game.

One of the Dublin privy councillors (Sir Nicholas White) has left on record a protest against the reforming tactics of the Irish bishops. He was himself in favour of a policy of conciliation, and com-

plains that he was denounced for this by the Bishop of Meath, who 'flatly affirmeth' that 'magistrates may not tolerate with Papists. . . . but rather root them out, for that they will be pricks in their eyes, thorns in their sides, and whips to their backs; in short, that the English should deal with the Irish Catholics as the Israelites dealt with the Canaanites.' 'The doctrine delivered by the bishop was that Christian princes must root out idolatry, and not join in an unequal yoke with infidels. This is true divinity confessed by all men.' Such is the comment of Archbishop Loftus on the abominable doctrine of the Bishop of Meath.

It is not necessary to multiply these extracts. I have given quite enough to show how groundless is the Archbishop of Armagh's assertion, that the Irish bishops in the time of Queen Elizabeth 'were thwarted by the Civil Government in every effort' they made for converting Ireland. It was only in a very few insignificant instances that they were 'thwarted;' and, after all, the 'thwarting' consisted only in imposing some slight check on the furious zeal which directed their efforts towards—not the conversion, but—the extermination of the natives. In fact, the whole tribe of Protestant bishops in Ireland, during the early period of the so-called Reformation, were mere fortune-hunters, being much more intent on possessing the properties of the Roman Catholics than on saving their souls. One of them, a needy Scotchman of the name of Montgomery, seeing, as he candidly admits, that 'a good fortune might be made in Ireland,'

resigned his deanery of Norwich, and had sufficient interest to get himself appointed Bishop of Derry, Clogher, and Raphoe, 'which three dioceses,' says Sir John Davys, 'comprise the chiefest part of Ulster, *now united for one man's benefit.*' This apostolic man appeared in Ireland *two years* after he was appointed, an interval which he spent very pleasantly in England on the solid income of his three united dioceses. And when he did appear, finding that he had no flock of his own to look after, he determined that the Roman Catholics of his see should pay well for the honour of having a Protestant bishop making an occasional excursion among them. He laid a tax of 4*d.* on every cow and plough horse; the same on every colt and calf; 2*s.* 6*d.* a quarter on every shoemaker, smith, and weaver; and 1*s.* 6*d.* on every married couple.

Then we have authentic accounts of Irish bishops inducting 'boys, kearns, laymen, and other incapable persons,' to livings; and, by way of variety, a man described as 'neither divine nor Christian,' and exceedingly immoral into the bargain, appointed archdeacon and commissary by Archbishop Loftus. In fact, the Irish Church (*lucus a non lucendo*) of that time was a cesspool of corruption and an engine of cruel tyranny. It went to Ireland (for it was in no sense a native of the soil) carrying the Gospel of the Reformation on the point of a sword, and holding in its other hand fetters and instruments of torture for those who refused to receive that Gospel. No wonder that its mission has been a failure. No wonder that, down

to our own time, the curse of barrenness has been upon it.

I observe that when all the stock arguments against the disestablishment of the Irish Church have been run through, Mr. Gladstone's opponents invariably wind up by saying that, anyhow, Mr. Gladstone was not the man who ought to have initiated a policy which 'gives the lie to the whole of his past life.'* His conversion is said to have been very sudden, almost instantaneous, and to have been inspired by no higher motive than an unscrupulous ambition and a mean jealousy of Mr. Disraeli. I think, and I shall presently prove, that this attack on Mr. Gladstone's consistency and sincerity is unfounded; but I am not altogether sorry that the attack has been made—though, it must be owned, it comes with an ill grace from those who have lately passed, with unexampled suddenness, through one of the most extraordinary transformation scenes in the political history of England. It is right at all times that our leading statesmen should be above the suspicion of being guided on questions of high policy by no worthier impulse than that which springs from party and personal considerations; but it is a matter of paramount importance at this moment. We are evidently on the eve of a great crisis in the history of England. Events are impending which may leave our country on a higher eminence of greatness and strength than she has yet reached, or, on the other hand, set her face in a direc-

* Duke of Marlborough's Speech on the Suspensory Bill.

tion which may lead to her decline and fall. It is, therefore, very necessary that we should scrutinise the claims of those who aspire to the honour of piloting the vessel of the State through the stormy and unknown sea on which she is about to enter. According to present probabilities, the responsibility of directing the counsels of the new Parliament will devolve either on Mr. Disraeli, or on Mr. Gladstone; and on the choice which the electors shall make in this matter may depend the stability of the British Empire. Now Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Disraeli have both arrived at that age when the character of each may be presumed to have taken its set; and therefore we may safely forecast the principles which are likely to guide their conduct in the future by the light reflected from the past career of each. An anonymous writer in the congenial pages of *Blackwood* has undertaken to defend the political consistency and disinterested patriotism of Mr. Disraeli; and if Mr. Disraeli's friends are satisfied with the result, his enemies have certainly no reason to be dissatisfied.

I am not going to vie with Mr. Disraeli's defender by going through the whole of Mr. Gladstone's political life. His opponents have deliberately selected what they consider a conclusive test of his political apostasy, namely, the alleged inconsistency of his conduct on the question of Church and State. Now I undertake to prove, in a very few pages, that his present Irish policy is in entire harmony with all that he has ever written or spoken on that subject.

Mr. Gladstone entered public life with a very de-

finite theory as to the relations which ought to exist between the Church and the State. As an English Churchman he maintained that the Church of England was the only authorised organ of revealed truth in this country, and that, as such, it was the duty of the State to support the Church of England, and *it alone*. It is necessary to insist on this fact, for it disposes entirely of the charge of inconsistency so glibly made against Mr. Gladstone on this subject. He maintained thirty-five years ago that the Church of England ought to have the *exclusive* support of the State, and that, if that principle were once abandoned, his theory was at an end, and he must henceforward, as a churchman and a patriot, adapt his parliamentary conduct to the new phase which the connection of Church and State, in his opinion, would assume. He protested then as energetically as he protested the other day in the House of Commons against 'the pantheistic' theory of a plurality of church establishments. He considered then, as he considers now, that the establishment of several religious communities would be more complete repudiation of the corporate Christianity of the State than total disestablishment would be. But I am anticipating.

Singularly enough, one of the first speeches delivered by Mr. Gladstone in the House of Commons was on the Irish Church, and against the Irish Temporalities Bill of Lord Derby, which Mr. Disraeli has recently defended in the House of Commons. Mr. Gladstone 'admitted that the Established Church of Ireland had long slumbered;' but he 'contended that the question

was, not what it had done, but was it capable of being fitted for action?' 'He was unwilling to see the number of Irish bishops reduced, because he believed that, in the course of time, their duties would very materially increase; and, when that was the case, it would be a difficult matter to restore those whom they were now about to destroy.' 'He feared that the probable effect of the Bill would be to *place the Church on an untenable foundation.*'

You will observe that in this speech, delivered in 1833, Mr. Gladstone rested his defence of the Irish Church Establishment on the hope, which he then entertained, that it was 'capable of being fitted for action;' and would, 'in course of time, very materially increase' its spiritual conquests among the Irish. At the same time, Mr. Gladstone 'feared that the probable effect of the Bill would be to place the Church on an *untenable foundation.*' How long he continued to 'hope against hope,' and to wrestle with the fears occasioned by the 'untenable foundation' on which Lord Derby's Bill had placed the Irish Church, is evident from his speech on the evening of Monday, March 30, this year, in explanation of his Resolutions.

In 1835, Mr. Gladstone delivered a speech against the Appropriation Clause. He thought the measure 'unjustifiable.' Why? 'Because there was no principle upon which the Protestant Church Establishment could be rightly or permanently upheld, but that it was the Establishment which taught the truth. . . . If those individuals who were called upon to fill the high functions of administering public affairs should

be compelled to exclude from their consideration the elements of true religion, and to view various strange and conflicting doctrines in the same light, instead of administering those noble functions, they would become helots and slaves.'

This extract proves that Mr. Gladstone was as much opposed in 1835, as he is in 1868, to Mr. Disraeli's Church and State policy of 'levelling up' on a par conflicting systems of religious belief.

'Since 1838' (he said*), 'that is, for a period of thirty years, what have we had in Ireland? In the first place, we have had the clergyman pursuing his avocation in perfect tranquillity, without any external barrier of any kind to impede him. We have had, in the second place, the clergy claiming, and well deserving, as I believe, the name of able, zealous, and pious ministers. *What more could be desired to test the capacity of the Church?* Yet more there has been. There has been that great calamity, the famine, which swept down chiefly, though not wholly, the Roman Catholic population of Ireland, and which gave to the Protestant clergy all over the country access as the givers of alms, both on their own behalf and on behalf of England, to every cottage in Ireland, and which placed in their hands a leverage of social power such as is hardly possible to over-estimate. Not only so, but there came in the rear of the famine a plague, and in the rear of that plague emigration. All these were burdens principally weighing on the Roman Catholic population. Yet, with all these advantages on the side of the Established Church, and with that terrific calamity bearing down the Roman Catholic people of Ireland, we again took the census in 1861, and we found that though there was a small change in favour of Protestantism, that change was so insignificant that it might fairly be called imperceptible, because, at that rate, the time that would be required

* In his speech on the 30th of last March.

for the conversion of the whole people would be 1,500 or 2,000 years.'

I have already shown that the 'small change in favour of Protestantism,' to which Mr. Gladstone refers, is entirely the result of accidental causes, and cannot be credited to Protestantism in any sense.

In the year 1836 Mr. Gladstone delivered a speech on the Tithes and Church (of Ireland) Bill; and the following remarkable extract from that speech will show how thoroughly consistent his present policy is with the views which he then enunciated with respect to the Irish Church.

'The noble lord opposite, who to-night made a speech in answer (if answer it were) to the noble lord the member for Lancashire, told us that this Bill was founded upon a great principle. The principle is great, sir, and not more great than bad; for he declared it to be that a Church Establishment is intended, not for the propagation of a doctrine, but for the instruction of a people. . . . But the other form in which the principle of the Bill has been stated is nearer the truth. It is said to be this—giving to the Protestants all that is required for their Church, and the rest to general instruction. Now, allowing this for argument's sake to be really a true description of the Bill, I say that not only will it never be a settlement of the question, but it ought not to be such. It rests upon no grounds of reason or justice, which can command the assent of any set of men. *It is fatal to assume as the measure of the means of a Church Establishment only the existing number of its members, without any reference to its prospective extension.* For a Church Establishment is maintained either for the sake of its members or its doctrines: for those whom it teaches, or for that which it teaches. *On the former ground it is not in equity tenable for a moment.* Why should any preference be given to me

over another fellow-subject? or what claim have I personally to have my religion supported, whilst another is disavowed by the State? No claim whatever in respect to myself. I concur entirely with gentlemen opposite, hostile to an Establishment, that no personal privilege ought in such a matter to be allowed. But if on the contrary I believe, as the great bulk of the British Legislature does believe, that the doctrine and system of the Establishment contain and exhibit truth in its purest and most effective form; and if we also believe truth to be good for the people universally, then we have a distinct and an immoveable ground for the maintenance of an Establishment; but it follows as a matter of course from the principle, that it must be maintained, not on a scale exactly and strictly adjusted to the present number of its own members, but on such a scale that it may also have the means of offering to others the benefits which it habitually administers to them. Therefore we wish to see the Establishment in Ireland upheld, NOT FOR THE SAKE OF THE PROTESTANTS, but of the people at large, that her ministers may be enabled to use the influences of their station, of kindly offices and neighbourhood, of the various occasions which the daily intercourse and habits of social life present; aye, and I do not hesitate to add of persuasion itself, applied by a zeal tempered with knowledge and discretion, in the propagation of that which is true, and which, being true, is good, as well for those who as yet have it not, as for those who have it. It is the proposition of the noble lord which is really open to the charge of bigotry, intolerance, and arbitrary selection; because, disavowing the maintenance and extension of truth, he continues, by way of personal privilege to the Protestants, the legal recognition of their Church, which he refuses to the Church of the Roman Catholics.'

In 1838, on the third reading of the Prisons Bill, Mr. Langdale proposed the insertion of a clause in

favour of the appointment of Roman Catholic chaplains when the number of Roman Catholic prisoners was sufficiently large. Mr. Estcourt opposed Mr. Langdale's clause, and moved an amendment in favour of securing to Protestant Dissenters alone the privilege which Mr. Langdale was anxious to obtain for the Roman Catholics. Mr. Gladstone spoke against 'both the clause and the amendment. He objected to any infringement whatever of the principle on which the Established Church was founded—*that of 'confining the pecuniary support of the State to one particular religious denomination.'*

In the same year, and for the same reason, he opposed a vote of 8,928*l.* for the College of Maynooth. 'He objected to the grant then before the House, *because it contravened and stultified the main principle on which the Established Church of England in Ireland was founded.'*

In 1838 appeared also Mr. Gladstone's formal treatise on 'The State in its Relations with the Church.' The very foundation of the theory there propounded is, that 'the Church is the Society with which, and with which alone, they (Government) can consistently form such an alliance as has been here described.' He denounces, as utterly inconsistent with his theory, 'that sort of eclecticism which a system of indiscriminate aid to different religious communions presupposes.'

'I am free to admit' (he says) 'that, on any other than specifically Christian principles, the human understanding would probably incline to the theory of a plurality of estab-

lishments: not as abstractedly preferable to unity, but so also neither as being essentially objectionable. There might be many reasons inclining a state to grant a demand of the kind if it were made; and accordingly we find that among the cultivated nations of antiquity, where public religion was observed chiefly with a view to its political effects, and the grand requisite was to flatter and soothe, and at the same time subjugate the popular mind, the ordinary practice was to enlarge with great facility the catalogue of national duties, subject to the sole reservation, that they should be such as should not tend to displace the old ones. . . . Rome, the mistress of state-craft, and beyond all other nations in the politic employment of religion, added without stint or scruple to her list of gods and goddesses, and consolidated her military empire by a skilful medley of all the religions of the world.

'Thus it continued while the worship of the Deity was but a conjecture or a contrivance; but when the rising of the Sun of Righteousness had given reality to the subjective forms of faith, had made actual and solid truth the common inheritance of all men, then the religion of Christ became, unlike other new creeds, an object of jealousy and of cruel persecution, because it would not consent to become a partner in this heterogeneous device, and planted itself upon truth, and not in the quicksands of opinion; and in the same natural order, when Christianity became the religion of the state, it excluded every other system from public patronage. . . . And should the Christian faith ever become but one among many coequal pensioners of a government, it will be a proof that subjective religion has again lost its god-given hold upon objective reality; or when, under the thin shelter of its name, a multitude of discordant schemes shall have been placed upon a footing of essential parity, and shall together receive the bounty of the legislature, this will prove that we are once more in a transition-state; that we are travelling back again from the

region to which the Gospel brought us, toward that in which it found us.' *

It was natural of course that, holding these views, he should express himself as follows in regard to the Maynooth Grant:

'If the State gives anything of pecuniary support to Romanism in Ireland; it should, in consistency, give everything. Unless it is bound in conscience to maintain the national church as God's appointed vehicle of religious truth, *it seems that it should adopt as its rule the numbers and the needs of the several classes of religionists*; and in either respect the claim of the Roman Catholic is infinitely the strongest. In amount this grant (then 8928*l.*) is niggardly and unworthy. In principle it is wholly vicious. . . . When foreigners express their astonishment at finding that we support in Ireland the church of a small minority, we may tell them that we support it on the high ground of conscientious necessity for its truth; but how can we evince the consistency which so elevated a principle requires from its professors while we are bound to support an institution, whose avowed and legitimate purpose it is constantly to denounce that truth as falsehood?

* *The State in its Relations with the Church*, vol. i. pp. 120, 121, 123–125. (4th Edition.)

† *The State in its Relations with the Church*, vol ii. pp. 300–301. The Duke of Marlborough elicited cheers from the House of Lords against Mr. Gladstone by a garbled extract from this quotation. The passage, as given by his Grace, began with 'when foreigners,' and ended at 'for its truth;' that is, at a semicolon; the omitted clause giving, in fact, a totally different meaning to the sentence. In other words, the Duke of Marlborough managed, by a deliberate *suppressio veri*, to make Mr. Gladstone say precisely the reverse of what Mr. Gladstone did say. And having thus wilfully misrepresented Mr. Gladstone, the Duke says very coolly, 'I cannot help

Towards the end of the year 1844, Sir R. Peel intimated his intention of increasing, in the following year, the grant to Maynooth. In consequence of this announcement Mr. Gladstone left Sir R. Peel's Government, and he took an early opportunity the following session of offering, in his place in Parliament, an explanation of his conduct. His explanation amounted to this,—that Parliament had so deliberately and repeatedly rejected the theory of Church and State put forward in his book, that he found himself under the necessity of reconsidering his whole position on that subject; and that he had resigned office because 'he had a strong conviction,' that when public men were about to change their opinions on 'a great constitutional question,' they should give the public such a pledge of sincerity as is involved in the sacrifice of office. Of the theory of Church and State propounded in his book he said,

'I still believe it to be the most salutary and the best *in every condition of the public sentiment that will bear its application.* . . . I can understand, and I have even ventured to vindicate as the most excellent and true, *in a state of society able to appreciate its truth,* the principle upon

thinking that, in the progress of this measure, we have strongly brought into light the political dishonesty of the process which has been resorted to.' One of the most curious phases of self-deception is the happy knack which some people have of unconsciously describing their own failings and faults under the delusion that they are describing those of their neighbours. The Duke sees that a 'process has been resorted to' which he rightly stigmatises as 'political dishonesty;' but he does not see that the culprit is himself, not Mr. Gladstone.

which a Christian State allies itself for religious purposes with the Christian Church, and with the Christian Church alone; *but if the time has come when, owing to the great advance of religious divisions, and likewise owing to a great modification of political sentiments, what remains of that system must be further infringed, then I cannot undertake to draw any line of distinction unfavourable to my Roman Catholic fellow-subjects in Ireland in particular.*' He 'therefore held it to be his duty to apply his mind' to the consideration of the Irish Church under the altered circumstances of its position, '*free from every slavish regard to a mere phantom of consistency, and with the sole and single view of arriving at such a conclusion as, upon the whole, the interests of the country and the circumstances of the case might seem to demand.*'

Later on in the session he supported the second reading of the Maynooth College Bill on the ground that the State, having deliberately surrendered the only position in which any consistent theory of Church and State could be maintained, he had no choice but to regard the special needs of different religionists, and the general interests of the country —always making the best bargain he could for the Church.

'I must inquire' (he said) 'into the ability of the State to promote religious truth as being, under any given circumstances, the measure of its duty. My hon. friend who sits by me, the member for the University of Oxford (Sir H. Inglis), is at the head of this opposition. He holds firmly by a rule which is perfectly intelligible, and by which I too would closely hold, if I could persuade myself that the state of the general convictions of the country, and its divisions, would warrant it; namely, that of the exclusive support of the national religion. . . . The rigid theory of

exclusive support to the Church has for so many years, and in so many ways, been progressively impaired, that I no longer can think it equitable to urge it as forming of itself a conclusive reason for the rejection of a measure that applies public money to the purposes of some other communion. . . . I must, then, recognise this as being so far an established fact. I may and I do lament it; but if I cannot alter it, it would be dishonest to refuse to recognise both it and what it entails and involves.'

It is as clear as daylight, therefore, that in the year 1845 Mr. Gladstone came reluctantly to the conclusion, and published it to the world, that so many inroads had been made on his theory of Church and State, that there was no longer any theory left for him to contend for; consequently that the Church of England must henceforth descend from its exclusive position in regard to temporal privileges, and fall back more and more on those spiritual prerogatives which are altogether independent of the State. This was the opinion, too, of a gentleman who spoke after Mr. Gladstone in this debate of 1845, and who has since risen to eminence. 'What is the result of the adroit argumentation of the right hon. gentleman?' asked Mr. Disraeli. 'It is this: that the principle upon which the State has hitherto been connected with the ecclesiastical affairs of this country is worn out. We must seek a new principle.' Yet Mr. Disraeli, occupying the secure vantage ground of his own remarkable consistency, is one of those who have lately accused Mr. Gladstone of having this year suddenly abandoned for the first time the theory

of Church and State with which he entered public life.

The next landmark in the history of Mr. Gladstone's opinions on the relations between Church and State is his speech on the Jew Bill in December, 1847. In the year 1841, Mr. Divett asked the House of Commons to assent to the admission of Jews to municipal offices. The motion was opposed by Mr. Gladstone on its first reading, 'because upon it rested the point whether the Jews should or should not sit in Parliament.' There was no division, however, on that occasion; but on the second reading Mr. Divett's opponents insisted on dividing, with the result of 137 against 24 in favour of the motion. In the minority appears, among others, the name of Mr. Gladstone. On the third reading of the Bill, says *Hansard*,

'Mr. Gladstone rose, pursuant to the notice he had given, to move as an amendment, that it be read a third time that day six months. If it were possible to draw a broad line of principle between a Bill to admit Jews to municipal offices, and one to permit them to hold other offices, including seats in Parliament, the subject would be different from that which they had now to discuss; but he was satisfied that such a line could not be drawn; and the advocates of this measure must, to be consistent, follow it up with another, throwing open to Jews seats in Parliament, and all other offices which might be held by Christians.'

Mr. Gladstone's speech however, able as it was, succeeded in mustering only 30 Tories in defence of Church and State; and the Bill was passed by a large majority, but was rejected by the Lords. In 1845 it became law, and the consequence which

Mr. Gladstone predicted soon followed in the shape of a Bill in favour of the admission of Jews into Parliament. This was in the winter of 1847. In the course of that year Mr. Gladstone had been elected as one of the representatives for Oxford, after a sharp contest against him by the Tories. When Lord John Russell introduced his Bill in favour of the Jews the University of Oxford petitioned, almost to a man, against it; and Mr. Gladstone's colleague, Sir R. H. Inglis, opposed it with all his might. Nevertheless Mr. Gladstone spoke and voted in favour of the measure. After paying a graceful compliment to his constituents, he said—

'I feel that here we have opportunities of judgment and of information in our own profession—for it may with some truth be called a profession—which others cannot have; and that I should be betraying my own plain duty to my constituents, if I were to succumb to their judgments in a case where I was conscientiously convinced that there was a better course to pursue.'

Mr. Gladstone immediately republished this speech in the form of a pamphlet, and with an elaborate preface, in which he reviewed the whole question of Church and State, and formally discarded, as no longer tenable, his treatise on 'the State in its Relations with the Church.' The whole speech is well worth reading, and is, in fact, a key to all Mr. Gladstone's Church policy since. A few extracts will indicate his line of argument:—

'The principle of exclusion from civil office on religious grounds,' he contended, 'could never be vindicated, after it

had once been subjected to serious question, except upon some distinct theory, wrought out with at least a show of consistency into the practice of the State. *We have no longer such a theory; and he who plainly announces this does not alter facts, but merely discloses them.* Our religious institutions, thank God! subsist and thrive, and in their venerable age, and amidst their many dangers, are rich with all the vigour and all the promise of early youth: but they subsist as facts, by their own vitality, and by their hold upon the general affection, respect, and confidence, not in obedience to, nor in conformity with, any logically ordered speculation. . . . I must regard the constitutional position (which the question of Church and State had assumed) not as the chance triumph of a particular party or opinion, but as established and, if I may so say, normal and organic facts, no longer to be reasoned upon, but to be reasoned from.'

Again:—

'Now that the State has made itself in a certain degree external to the Church and her laws, it is time that we should consent in a certain degree to view the Church as a body external to the State, should think more of emancipating the distribution of offices in the Church from servitude to political party, and should seek to make her living organs, instead of echoing back the voice of any section, religious or political, or the notion of the day, faithful exponents of her own system, defined by her own laws.'

Once more:—

'Lastly, though in an argument of this kind I am reluctant to mix personal matter, it may, perhaps, be right that I should state why the reasons which led me to oppose, in 1841, a Bill for granting municipal privileges to the Jews, have not guided me to a like decision on an occasion when the greater question of admission to Parliament is agitated. My opinion is now, as I declared it in 1841, that the muni-

cipal privilege could not be granted and the parliamentary privilege withheld. The ground on which, having given to the Jew himself the franchise, and to every class of professing Christians the freest entrance into Parliament and office, we could refuse to the Jew what yet remained for him to ask, was narrow; and I then thought, as I think now, that it would not bear to be narrowed any more without total surrender. When municipal privileges were granted in 1845, almost without a contest, I took no part in the proceedings, mainly because if I had shared in them I must either have affirmed or denied the principle I had before asserted, that they involved the corresponding concession with regard to Parliament, and I thought it better to take time for consideration than to bind my judgment by a premature decision on a question which had not practically arisen.

'I had, at an earlier period, striven to persuade myself and others, that the nation had not yet reached the point at which it would become impracticable, and, even if practicable, unjust, for the State to act upon the rule of exclusive support to the Church, with simple toleration to other forms of religion; setting aside particular cases in which our hands might be considered as tied up by the pledges, direct or implied, of those who had preceded us. It may be that I unconsciously strained the facts of the case, as they stood eight or ten years ago, in order to find for myself a warrant to cling to the cherished, and under given conditions legitimate, and even in my view obligatory, principle of unity in national religion; but, if so, it was the less to be denied (and I myself sufficiently perceived so much as this) that any further relaxations of our policy would render it impossible to appeal, with any kind of impartiality or consistency, to any principle of the Constitution against the civil and political claims of bodies separated from the National Church.

At that time I was so sanguine as to cherish a belief in the capacity of the reviving energies of the Church to re-absorb

with rapidity a great portion of the masses detached from her; she was then gaining alike in extension outwards, and in harmony within. But since that period new features have appeared in the religious movements of the day: a disloyal spirit and a secret preference for an aggressive communion developed themselves; and though her inward vitality and consistency have endured and survived the strain, and real life and the capacity for truly great achievements rise higher and higher within her, yet, as a public institution claiming to be the exclusive handmaid of the State for religious purposes, she has been so far weakened by this in combination with other and political causes, that she has, it may be said, silently surrendered one of her ancient prerogatives—that of being the sole recipient of the bounty, as she is also the sole subject of the control, of the Legislature. . . . My own language of late years has therefore been, that as citizens and as members of the Church we should contend manfully for her own principles and constitution, and should ask and press without fear for whatever tends to her own healthy development by her own means and resources, material or moral, but should deal amicably and liberally with questions either solely or mainly affecting the civil rights of other portions of the community. Disclaiming every forced construction of the principle of such conduct, declining to be tied to it as a set theory, far less as a calculating machine, asserting a perfect freedom to judge of its application to each particular case upon its own merits, I think it reasonable in itself, and well adapted to the spirit of our institutions, and to the genius of the people, as well as to the exigencies immediately connected with our divisions in faith and in communion. This I regard as our appointed function: in this, as I think, the duties of churchman and of patriot are harmonised under the conditions of the time in which we live, and for which we are to consult and to labour.'

The year 1851 was distinguished by the great No-Popery agitation against the establishment of the Roman Catholic hierarchy in England. Lord John Russell headed the movement by his famous Durham Letter; and Mr. Disraeli, ever on the alert to catch the popular gale, determined to outbid the Whig Premier in a No-Popery letter to the Lord-Lieutenant of Buckingham, in which he blamed Lord John Russell for not having gone far enough. A small band in the House of Commons, including such names as those of Mr. Sidney Herbert, the Duke of Newcastle, Sir Roundell Palmer, Sir James Graham, and Mr. Gladstone, tried in vain to quell the storm. They pleaded for justice; they warned the Government that the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill would prove a dead letter, thereby helping the cause which it was meant to injure. They argued, Mr. Gladstone especially, that the Church of England was far more likely to be harmed than aided by any attempt to connect her in the eyes of the people with injustice to other religious communions. But their pleading was in vain. The Whigs under Lord John Russell and the Tories under Mr. Disraeli united their forces against the gallant phalanx of the Peelites, and the Titles Bill was passed by an overwhelming majority (438 against 95). Some remarkable speeches were delivered in the debate. Mr. Gladstone's speech, in particular, was one of extraordinary power and fulness; and he found himself, as on some other occasions before and after, standing apart from all the rest of the University Members.

'My own case' (he said) 'is that I am the only member representing an English university, and a large and important body of the English clergy, deeply interested in this question, who is to take a course in opposition to the sentiments and judgments of all his colleagues on this question. It is with no sentiments of shame, although with deep regret, that I refer to that difference of opinion; because, while I confess my vote on this Bill will be governed by a regard to the principles of Imperial policy, and to the welfare of the entire community, the consideration by which I am led to this conclusion is a consideration which, I am ready to defend and maintain, is formed with reference to the single interests of the Church of England and its clergy, because . . . the true interests of the clergy of the Church of England and the Church of Ireland are not to be promoted, at this time of day, by pretending to place them between a large body of our fellow-subjects and the fullest enjoyment of religious equality.'

The peroration of the speech expresses Mr. Gladstone's views on religious liberty so well, and is in itself such a gem of noble eloquence, that I am tempted to quote the chief part of it.

'The question really comes to this,—Will we go forwards or backwards in the matter of religious liberty? . . . Have you no faith in your free institutions? Do you think so ill of England—do you think so ill of the national character—do you think so ill of the capacity of your religion to bear the brunt of free competition, as to say that you will now attempt to fence it about with legal enactments, instead of trusting to its own spiritual strength, and to the firmness and depth of your own convictions; above all, to this conviction, that if the truth is on your side, God will give you the victory? Oh, sir, I hope you will cast away the unworthy means of fencing about that which, if it required to

be so fenced, would be little worth defending. . . . My conviction is, that the question of religious freedom is not to be dealt with as one of the ordinary matters that you may do to-day and undo to-morrow. This great principle which we have the honour to represent moves slowly in matters of politics and legislature; but although it moves slowly, it moves steadily. The principle of religious freedom, its adaptation to our modern state, and its compatibility with ancient institutions, was a principle which you did not adopt in haste. It was a principle well tried in struggle and conflict. It was a principle which gained the assent of one public man after another. It was a principle which ultimately triumphed after you had spent upon it half a century of agonising struggle. And now what are you going to do? You have arrived at the division of the century. Are you going to repeat Penelope's process, but without Penelope's purpose?. Are you going to spend the latter half of the nineteenth century in undoing the great work which, with so much pain and difficulty, your greatest men have been achieving during the former? Surely not. Recollect the functions you have to perform in the face of the world. Recollect that Europe and the whole of the civilised world look to England at this moment, more than ever they looked before, as the mistress and guide of nations, in regard to the great work of civil legislation. And what is it they chiefly admire in England? It is not the rapidity with which you form constitutions and broach abstract theories. On the contrary, they know that nothing is so distasteful to you as abstract theories, and that you are proverbial for resisting what is new until you are assured of its safety and beneficial tendency. But they know that when you make a step forwards you keep it. They know that there is reality and honesty about your proceedings. They know that you are not a monarchy to-day, a republic to-morrow, and a military despotism the third day. They know that you are free from the vicissitudes that have marked the career of neigh-

bouring nations. Your fathers and yourselves have earned this brilliant character for England. Do not forget it. Do not allow it to be tarnished. Show, if you will, the Pope of Rome and his Cardinals and his Church that England as well as Rome has her *semper eadem*; and that when she has once adopted the great principles of legislation which are destined to influence her national character and mark her policy for ages to come, and affect the whole nature of her influence among the nations of the world—show that when she has done this, slowly but still deliberately, and once for all, she can no more retrace her steps than the river that bathes this great city can flow back on its course. The character of England is in our hands. Let us feel the responsibility that belongs to us; and let us rely on it, if we make this step backwarks, it is one we shall have to retrace with pain. We cannot turn back the tendencies of the age towards religious liberty. It is our business to forward them. To endeavour to turn them back is childish; and every effort you make in that direction will recoil upon you with disaster and disgrace. The noble lord (Lord John Russell) appealed to the gentlemen who sit behind me in the names of Hampden and Pym. I have great reverence for the names of Hampden and Pym—in one portion, at least, of their political career, because they were persons energetically engaged in resisting oppression. But I would rather have heard Hampden and Pym quoted on any other subject than one which relates to the mode of legislation or the policy to be adopted in dealing with our Roman Catholic fellow-christians, because, if there was one blot on their escutcheon—if there was one painful feature in the character of the party among whom they were the most distinguished chiefs—it was the bitter and ferocious intolerance which in them became the more powerful because it was directed against the Roman Catholics. I would appeal in other names to gentlemen on this side of the House. If Hampden and Pym were friends of freedom, so were Clarendon and Newcastle, so were the

gentlemen who sustained the principle of loyalty while the principle of freedom was sustained by those whose names were quoted by the noble lord. If he appeals to you in the name of Hampden and Pym, I appeal to you in the name of the great men to whom Hallam says, "we owe the preservation of the throne of this ancient monarchy," in favour of the Roman Catholics. They were not always seeking to tighten the chain and deepen the brand. Their disposition was to relax the severity of the law, and attract the affections of their Roman Catholic fellow-subjects by treating them as brethren. I hope my appeal in their name will be equally appropriate to the appeal made by the noble lord in the name of Hampden and Pym. We are here strong in the consciousness of a strong cause. . . . We are a minority, insignificant in point of numbers. We are more insignificant because we have no ordinary bond of union. What is it that binds us together against you but the conviction that we have on our side the principle of justice—the conviction that we shall soon have on our side the course of public opinion? (Hear, and "Oh, oh!") I am not conscious of having spoken offensively. I am sure I did not wish to say a syllable that would wound the feelings of any man. But I say that we, minority as we are, are sustained in our path by the consciousness that we serve both a generous Queen and a generous people, and that the generous people will recognise the truth of the facts we present to them. But, above all, we are sustained by the sense of justice which we feel belongs to the cause we are advocating, and because we are determined to follow that bright star of justice beaming from the heavens whithersoever it may lead.'

'The generous people' *have* 'recognised the truth of the facts' which Mr. Gladstone then 'presented to them;' and they think all the more highly of him for having bravely opposed their foolish excitement, at the risk of losing their and his Sovereign's favour,

and his own seat in Parliament. Mr. Disraeli followed Mr. Gladstone, and his speech consisted of a series of small carpings at Lord John Russell's Bill. He had evidently no great respect for the Bill; but the popular voice was in its favour; and so Mr. Disraeli, while depreciating the measure, took care to be on the popular side. One of his objections was, that the Bill 'ought to have legislated not only against the assumption of titles, but against the ascription of titles to them (Roman Catholic Ecclesiastics) by Her Majesty's Ministers.' The Bill became law with Mr. Disraeli's help; and yet we have lately seen 'Her Majesty's Ministers,' with Mr. Disraeli at their head, not only 'ascribing titles' to Roman Catholic Bishops, but actually giving a Roman Catholic Archbishop precedence over the Anglican Archbishop. But the part of Mr. Disraeli's speech to which I wish to call special attention is the following:—

'What Mr. Gladstone meant was, that Papal organisation and freedom of ecclesiastical action ought to be granted, in order that the same liberty of synodical and other action might, upon the same grounds, be hereafter claimed for the Church of England. In other words, Mr. Gladstone was opposed to the union of Church and State.'

Thus we find Mr. Disraeli declaring, first in 1845 and then in 1851, that Mr. Gladstone had discarded his book on Church and State. With what face, then, can he now join those who yelp at Mr. Gladstone's heels and cry out that he has suddenly abandoned his principles for the sake of office? But it is idle to look for consistency or magnanimity in Mr. Disraeli.

In 1852 Mr. Gladstone published a pamphlet 'On the Functions of Laymen in the Church.' What view he there took of the connection of Church and State will be apparent from the following extract:—

'The time has been when, as I think, it was the duty of a good citizen to look with utter aversion on whatever seemed to impair strictness of religious character and profession in the State. With that religious character, consistently and rigidly maintained, it is hard, as we must admit, to reconcile full liberty of conscience; but in maintaining it, for the times of which I speak, the greater good was preserved and the lesser sacrificed. It is not so now. It is now so utter an impossibility to uphold a consistent religious profession in the State, that we must be satisfied with an inconsistent one, and thankful if it do not shock the common reason and sense of justice planted in mankind, by affecting a bastard and deceptive consistency. I am jealous of all attempts at consistency in this matter, most of all because I am convinced that they would and must result in the greatest of civil calamities—the mutilation, under the seal of authority, of the Christian religion itself. The garment will not fit the wearer; and if it is to be put on, as his figure cannot change to suit it, it therefore must change to suit him; must stretch here, and draggle there, and tear everywhere. If such would be the necessary result of aiming at consistency, we may well be content to forego the effort for attaining it. But then this inconsistency of profession, being radical and systematic, palpably and greatly alters the qualifications and authority of the State in respect to religion, and reduces it more and more to the character, although *circa sacra*, of a temporal agency and influence. The wave of Christianity may indeed be receding from the summits of society, which it took centuries to reach. We have now had before us for many years the undeniable and singular fact that, while the tone and amount of personal religion have been rising in general

society, the religious character of the State, as such, has progressively declined. But the provision made by the Almighty for the everlasting maintenance of His truth can never fail, if and when His Church is true to herself.' *

In the same year, as previously in 1850, Mr. Gladstone strove hard to obtain freedom of synodical action for the Church in the colonies. But Mr. Disraeli was then in office, and Mr. Gladstone was opposed by several members of the Government, and defeated. The extract given above from Mr. Disraeli's speech in favour of the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill, shows his *animus* in regard to the Church of England's right to 'liberty of synodal and other action.' Yet who more eloquent than Mr. Disraeli in favour of 'liberty of synodal and other action for the Church of England,' when that cry is likely to help on a party victory? We all remember how that cry was raised in the Sheldonian theatre for the purpose of turning Mr. Gladstone out of Oxford, and how venerable dignitaries on that occasion flung their shovel hats into the air with wild huzzas of joy. 'Another David,' cried the *Churchman*, in an ecstasy of jubilation, 'strong in the name of the Lord, has overthrown the mightiest of the Philistines, and scattered their host.'

But let me proceed with my narrative.

The Tories, having done their best to prevent Mr. Gladstone's election for Oxford in 1847, made an attempt to oust him in 1852. They distributed among the constituency a private circular, which stated that

* *On the Functions of Laymen in the Church*, p. 9.

'Mr. Gladstone's views on Church and State since 1847 had undergone a change little anticipated.' This was followed by a public appeal to the University to reject Mr. Gladstone, because 'the abandonment of the Church's connection with the State is necessarily involved in the legitimate development of the principles he now advocates.' This was not a fair deduction from Mr. Gladstone's published views on Church and State, for he nowhere 'advocated the abandonment of the Church's connection with the State.' But this charge against him in 1852 places his present accusers, who were also his accusers then, in this dilemma: either they were sincere in 1852 when they accused him of having changed his views on Church and State, in which case they are hypocrites now in charging him with having suddenly abandoned his principles; or they are sincere now, in which case they were hypocrites in 1852. Let them take their choice. One of the principal assailants of Mr. Gladstone in 1852 was Sir Brooke Bridges, now Lord Fitzwalter, who presided the other day at the Crystal Palace Demonstration in support of Church and State, and gave the approval of his silence to a speaker who declared that 'Judas Iscariot was a gentleman compared with Mr. Gladstone; for the one had only betrayed Christ, while the other had betrayed His Church.' Noblemen and members of Parliament, bishops and presbyters, were present at that meeting; and by their silence they made themselves responsible for the coarse profanities which this choice defender of the Church spluttered out among

them. Are we to understand that it is quite allowable for Tory peers and members of Parliament to 'descend into the gutter,' while such a descent is altogether out of keeping with Mr. Gladstone's character? It must be some satisfaction to Mr. Gladstone to find his political opponents so much more jealous of his honour than they are of their own.

The next point that I shall take is Mr. Gladstone's speech on the Irish Church in 1865. What was the purport of that speech? I have it before me now, and I have the additional advantage of having listened to it when it was delivered. Mr. Gladstone distinctly declared that the Irish Church Establishment could not be maintained; that no legitimate defence could be made for it; that his own mind was made up on the subject, but that it would be unwise, and not only unwise but criminal, for the Government to commit itself to any line of action on the subject till it saw a fair prospect, from the state of the public sentiment, of bringing it to a happy conclusion. 'The difficulties of the Irish Church cannot be surmounted by the wisdom of her rulers, or by the piety and devotion of her clergy,' because she is in 'a false position.' But the state of the public mind did not admit of dealing with the subject yet; it 'was not so much a question for present as for future consideration.'

How did the Conservative party regard the speech? Let their spokesman, Mr. Whiteside, answer:—

'His (Mr. Gladstone's) object was to intimate that the time would come when he could with safety sweep away the Irish Church, sever it from the English Church, and yet

call upon the Protestants of Ireland to be loyal, dutiful, and respectful, even though Parliament should so far forget its duty as to adopt the recommendation of political suicide. (Loud Opposition cheers.) The right hon. gentleman would not act on the present motion, of a part of which he approved, but took occasion to lay the foundation, and sow the seeds of a future policy, *to be adopted when the noble viscount was no longer at the head of the Government to restrain him.*' (Loud Opposition cheers.)

I heard those ringing cheers, and Mr. Gathorne Hardy's voice was one of the loudest. On the 28th of March, 1865, the Conservative party declared with one consent their belief that Mr. Gladstone would propose the disestablishment of the Irish Church on the first favourable opportunity after Lord Palmerston's death. Nor is this all. About a month afterwards, Mr. Gathorne Hardy became formally a candidate for Mr. Gladstone's seat at Oxford, and his committee published an address in which special mention was made of Mr. Gladstone's Irish Church speech as a reason why Oxford should reject him. In fact, it is quite certain that Mr. Gladstone's speech on the Irish Church and his Reform speech in the previous year in favour of a 6*l.* borough franchise turned him out of Oxford; and it is a singular instance of the irony of fate, that the man who supplanted him should have helped to pass a Household Suffrage Bill, and should this year have praised Mr. Gladstone's Irish Church speech of 1865 as 'wise and temperate,' and 'just such a speech as a prudent statesman should have made;' * that very speech, forsooth, which Mr.

* Mr. Gathorne Hardy's Speech on Mr. Maguire's Motion.

Hardy and his friends stigmatised as 'revolutionary' three years ago, and which materially aided in placing Mr. Hardy in the seat which he now occupies! Verily, Mr. Gathorne Hardy's 'education' is going on apace. See what it is to have a leader who 'educates his party!'

But I shall be reminded of Mr. Gladstone's letter to Dr. Hannah. Well, here is the letter:—

'11, Carlton House Terrace, S.W., June 8, 1865.

'Dear Dr. Hannah,—It would be very difficult for me to subscribe to *any* interpretation of my speech on the Irish Church like that of your correspondent, which contains so many conditions and bases of a plan for dealing with a question apparently remote, and at the same time full of difficulties on every side. My reasons are, I think, plain. 1. Because the question is remote, and apparently out of all bearing on the practical politics of the day, I think it would be for me worse than superfluous to determine upon any scheme or basis of a scheme with respect to it. 2. Because it is difficult, even if I anticipated any likelihood of being called upon to deal with it, I should think it right to make no decision beforehand on the mode of dealing with the difficulties. But the first reason is that which chiefly weighs. As far as I know, my speech signifies pretty clearly the broad distinction which I take between the abstract and the practical views on the subject. And I think I have stated strongly my sense of the responsibility attaching to the opening of such a question *except in a state of things which gave promise of satisfactorily closing it. For this reason it is that I have been so silent about the matter, and may probably be so again, but I could not as a Minister and as member for Oxford allow it to be debated an indefinite number of times and remain silent.* One thing, however, I may add, because I think it a clear landmark. In any

measure dealing with the Irish Church, I think (though I scarcely *expect* ever to be called on to share in such a measure) the Act of Union must be recognised and must have important consequences, especially with reference to the position of the hierarchy.

'I am much obliged to you for writing, and I hope you will see and approve my reasons for not wishing to carry my *own mind* further into a question lying at a distance I cannot measure.

'Yours sincerely,

(Signed) 'W. E. GLADSTONE.

'Rev. the Warden, Trin. Coll., Perth.'

And what does it amount to? Mr. Gladstone says, in effect, 'My own mind is made up on the subject; but I do not at present see any prospect of "a state of things" which would admit of my acting on my convictions. As we are on the eve of a general election, however, I think it fair to give my constituents fair notice of my opinions.' Mr Gathorne Hardy, having profited by Mr. Gladstone's straightforward conduct, has now the fairness and the generosity to turn round on Mr. Gladstone, and twist his very frankness into a charge of hypocrisy against him. I think it would have been wiser on the part of Mr. Gathorne Hardy to have 'let sleeping dogs lie.' In 1865 Mr. Gladstone thought that the Irish Church Question was 'apparently remote,' and he 'did not anticipate any likelihood of being called upon to deal with it.' That was a very reasonable conclusion to come to in 1865; and what has precipitated the solution of the question? Preeminently the conduct of the Government of which Mr. Gathorne Hardy is a

prominent member. The country has seen a great party, an historic party, a party which it considered chivalrous and high principled, and of which, even when opposed to it, it was inclined to be proud, this party it has seen exhausting every species of stratagem in its frantic efforts to prevent any lowering of the borough franchise; and then having got into office on the very condition of opposing any 'vertical extension' of the franchise, the same party suddenly turned its back upon itself, abandoned all its principles, proclaimed that 'the time had come when Reform ought no longer to involve the fate of Ministries' (a convenient discovery when you have got into office), appealed to the extreme Radicals against the moderate Liberals, and ended in passing through Parliament Mr. Bright's much maligned Reform Bill. Lord Macaulay, observing in 1852 the dishonest way in which the Conservative Government of that day was dealing with the question of Free Trade, delivered the following remarkable prediction as to the manner in which a Derby-Disraeli Government was likely to deal with the Reform Question, if it should ever have an opportunity:—

'On the whole, what I do expect is, that they will offer a pertinacious, vehement, provoking opposition to safe and honourable change; and that then, in some moment of fear or caprice, they will bring in, and fling on the table, in a fit of desperation or levity, some plan which will loosen the very foundations of society.' *

Macaulay's prediction has been strikingly fulfilled

* *Speeches*, p. 516.

fifteen years after it was uttered. A Conservative Government has indeed gone far towards 'loosening the very foundations of society' by the rude shock which it has given to the nation's confidence in the honour and integrity of its public men. It is already tolerably clear that the Irish Church Establishment is not the only question which the conduct of Mr. Gathorne Hardy and his colleagues has brought a generation nearer its solution than it was three years ago; and therefore I cannot help thinking that it will be wiser for Mr. Hardy in future to maintain a discreet silence when political consistency and sudden conversions are the subjects of discussion.

The next occasion on which Mr. Gladstone spoke on the question of the Irish Church was on the 7th of May last year. You must know his speech well, for you were the seconder of the motion which introduced the debate. In that speech Mr. Gladstone said, that 'it was with reluctance that he arrived at the conclusion' that Parliament could not engage in legislative action on the subject that year, 'because his own opinions were in conformity with those of his hon. friend'—that is yourself. Now what your opinions were is plain enough from your speech; they were in favour of the speedy disestablishment of the Irish Church. Mr. Gladstone said emphatically that the removal of anomalies within the Establishment itself would not touch the evil, because 'the monopoly of principle would remain; and the more you remove and mitigate those anomalies of detail, the more offensive in the minds of the Irish people would be that

monopoly of principle. The real question is, whether the existence of the Irish Church as an establishment in exclusive possession of Church property, supposing every anomaly and detail to be removed, is tenable.' He maintained that it was not. 'You cannot maintain the Church of Ireland on the ground of truth,' while the College of Maynooth is maintained to teach that the Established Church is a falsehood; 'you cannot maintain it on the ground that it is the Church of the mass of the population, or on the ground that it is the Church of the poorer portion of the population. That being the case, is it really to be supposed that the Irish people will bow to such a principle as now unhappily subsists in our policy towards that country in this respect? Would we tolerate it ourselves?' Mr. Gladstone concluded thus:—

'I think the hon. member for Longford is correct in his anticipation that the time is not far distant when the Parliament of England, which at present undoubtedly has its hands full of other most important business and engagements, will feel it its duty to look this question fairly and fully in the face; and I confess that I am sanguine enough to cherish a hope that, though not without difficulty, a satisfactory result will be arrived at, the consequences of which will be so happy and pleasant for us all, that we shall wonder at the folly which has so long prevented its being brought about.'

This speech was characterised by the Attorney-General for Ireland as 'directly communistic in its tendency;' and he insisted that 'every argument' which Mr. Gladstone had used 'for the spoliation of the Irish Church was equally applicable to individuals.' Lord Naas (Lord Mayo) declared that Mr. Gladstone's

speech 'tended to the uprooting of all establishments.' And yet this speech was not once referred to in any of the discussions on the Irish Church this year. Nay, Lord Cairns went so far as to assert, in his speech on the Suspensory Bill, that 'there had been no parliamentary discussion on the subject whatever' between the summer of 1865 and the spring of this year; and this was said with the intention of showing up Mr. Gladstone's inconsistency. I will not waste your time by asking you to read the variety of phraseology in which the Conservatives clothed their charge of apostasy against Mr. Gladstone. I will take only one specimen, from Mr. Gathorne Hardy's speech of March 31. And here I cannot help remarking on the singularly bad taste which Mr. Hardy has displayed in reference to Mr. Gladstone since he took his place as representative for Oxford. No beaten candidate, I venture to say, ever showed a more chivalrous courtesy towards a successful opponent than Mr. Gladstone showed towards Mr. Hardy. But whether it was that Mr. Hardy felt annoyed at the comparisons which the Press had pretty generally made between the late and present member for Oxford, and wished to show that he was not afraid of Mr. Gladstone, or whatever be the cause, certain it is that, since the election of 1865, he has assumed towards Mr. Gladstone a bearing of acrid animosity. In the first speech which he made as a Minister of the Crown, in 1867, he went out of his way to affront Mr. Gladstone by telling him, in the face of the House of Commons, that he (Mr. Hardy) declined to acknowledge him as

leader of the Opposition; and the climax of his personalities was reached in his attack on Mr. Gladstone's integrity in the speech from which I am about to quote. Mr. Gladstone had said that his views on Church and State and on the position of the Irish Church Establishment had been gradually changing for the last twenty-five years — a fact which, I think, I have proved to demonstration; and this is how Mr. Hardy met Mr. Gladstone's avowal:—

'But, speaking of changing opinions, I am induced by the challenge of the right hon. member for South Lancashire to discuss the impropriety of his bringing forward this measure. As I understood him, his opinions have been forming for the last twenty-five years, until they have now by a gradual process reached their present stage of development. He says that in 1846 he stated it was *impossible for him to pledge himself in principle to the maintenance of the Irish Church.* I wish to ask, to whom was that known? (Cheers.)

'*Mr. Gladstone.* — To my committee. (Laughter and Opposition cheers.)

'*Mr. Hardy.*—The right hon. gentleman says it was proclaimed to his committee; he must have had a singularly judicious committee, *for until the right hon. gentleman rose last night the declaration was a secret that had never been revealed.* (Cries of "Oh!" and cheers.) It has *never been known to the public.* I say, then, that the opinions of the right hon. gentleman had not been openly professed. He was using what is called by divines "economy and reserve" (laughter), and he was abstaining from professing those opinions which in this great emergency he has so suddenly avowed. (Loud cheers.)

Now Mr. Gathorne Hardy here affirms, and his party assent with cheers, that, 'until last night,' i. e.

March 30, 1868, Mr. Gladstone's change of opinion on the Irish Church Establishment 'was a secret that had never been revealed, never been known to the public.' And this in the teeth of Mr. Gladstone's speech of 1867, not to go further back, against the Irish Establishment! What shall we say of this wild accusation? Surely it is either the very crapulence of ignorance, or it is 'an organised hypocrisy'—to quote the phrase in which Mr. Disraeli once expressed his opinion of the Conservative party. Those who say that Mr. Gladstone has suddenly changed his views on the Irish Church, and that he has taken the public by surprise, are either wilfully blind; or they say these things, not because they expect to be believed, but merely to impart a little pungency to a stale or insipid argument. The date of Mr. Gladstone's change of opinion has really no bearing at all on the policy or impolicy of disestablishing the Irish Church; but that his parliamentary action on the subject this year is the result of a slowly matured conviction, extending over more than twenty-five years, is simply a fact which the pages of *Hansard* prove to demonstration.

Moreover, Lord Russell, on May 27, 1867, warned Lord Derby that the Liberals were prepared to deal with the Irish Church the following year. These are his words:—

'My impression is, that although it is quite right that the question should not be raised this year, for the same reason that I did not like to see it raised last year—namely, that the Reform Bill was under discussion; yet I do believe that

a change of spirit has taken place on the subject with the people of England; and if the noble Earl (Derby) carries this measure (the English Reform Bill), *I should expect that we shall be prepared next year to remedy this grievance* (of the Irish Establishment) *also.*'

Thus we see that the leaders of the Opposition in both Houses of Parliament gave fair notice, in the beginning of the summer of 1867, that they expected the Government to take up the question of the Irish Church *this year*; and they gave as a reason their belief that 'a change of spirit had taken place on the subject with the people of England.' This change in the public mind was caused partly by the serious aspect assumed by Fenianism, but primarily by the violent shock which the conduct of the Tory party on the question of Reform had given to the institutions of the country generally. And, in addition to all this, the Government fully recognised the necessity of making some effort to solve the Irish Question this year. On his accession to the premiership Mr. Disraeli distinctly intimated that he had 'a liberal, a truly liberal, policy' for Ireland; and this policy was duly heralded with a great flourish of trumpets by the ministerial organs. The policy was at length announced; and it turned out to be, of all others, the very policy against which Mr. Gladstone had been consistently protesting all his life. Is it really to be maintained, then, that Mr. Gladstone, being thus openly challenged, was to sit still and hold his peace —and that, too, in spite of his public avowal, a twelvemonth before, that the time had arrived for

doing justice to Ireland by disestablishing the Irish Church? Mr. Gladstone would indeed deserve all the abuse which has been showered upon his head if he had taken a course so unworthy of his position and character.

Having now vindicated Mr. Gladstone's consistency —to the satisfaction, I am sure, of all who have not wilfully closed their eyes to facts and their reason to conviction—it is fitting that I should inquire briefly into the claims to consistency put forth on the part of him who may be called, *par excellence*, the chameleon of politics—the Right Honourable Benjamin Disraeli, Prime Minister of England.

There is one character in English history which Mr. Disraeli has always held up to admiration as his *beau ideal* of a patriotic statesman. In season and out of season, in novels, grave political essays, and parliamentary speeches, he has proclaimed 'the injured Bolingbroke' as his model of an English statesman, a very Bayard of politics, and, above all, a hero whom the generous youth of England ought to study and to copy.* Now, who and what was Bolingbroke? He was at once the most brilliant orator, the most sparkling writer, and the most profligate nobleman of his age: in morals a shameless rake, in politics an unprincipled schemer, in religion an atheist; a corrupter of his country's morals, a traitor to his sovereign, and a blasphemer of his God. Such is the

* A better authority than Mr. Disraeli has characterised Bolingbroke as 'a presumptuous and superficial writer.' Burke, *Works*, vol. iv. 254.

man whom Mr. Disraeli has avowedly and ostentatiously taken for his patron saint in politics, and whom he deliberately proposes as the tutelary guardian of our English youth. It is a trite remark that the character of the devotee becomes assimilated to that of the object of his worship, and Mr. Disraeli's political career is evidence enough that his hero's political morality has found in the admiring disciple a faithful exponent.

In the year 1832 Mr. Disraeli made his first essay in the arena of politics. He determined to contest the borough of High Wycombe as an ultra-Radical; and he applied to Daniel O'Connell and to Mr. Joseph Hume for vouchers to the purity of his Radicalism. From both he received the most satisfactory testimonials, which he placarded through the streets of the town; and to both he returned his warmest thanks. Here is his letter to Mr. Hume:—

'Bradenham House, Wycombe, June 5, 1832.

'Sir,—I have had the honour and the gratification of receiving your letter this morning. Accept my sincere, my most cordial thanks.

'It will be my endeavour that you shall not repent the confidence you have reposed in me.

'Believe me, sir, that if it be my fortune to be returned in the present instance to a reformed Parliament, I shall remember with satisfaction that that return is mainly attributable to the interest expressed in my success by one of the most distinguished and able of our citizens.

'I have the honour to be, sir,

'Your obliged and faithful servant,

(Signed) 'B. DISRAELI.

'Joseph Hume, Esq., M.P.'

Mr. Disraeli's gratitude to Mr. O'Connell was expressed with equal warmth. But the Whig candidate was too strong for him, and, in spite of the recommendations of the great Repealer and of 'the Father of Radicalism,' Mr. Disraeli was beaten, but not discouraged. Soon after, 'a speedy vacancy being generally anticipated in the representation' of Marylebone, a long address appeared from Mr. Disraeli 'To the Independent Electors of the Borough of Marylebone,' couched in the most approved language of Radicalism. Triennial Parliaments, the ballot, and the substitution of direct for indirect taxation were among the articles of faith which Mr. Disraeli professed in that address.

It was on this occasion that he made the famous avowal, 'My forte is sedition.' But the anticipated vacancy did not take place, and in December of the following year (1834) Mr. Disraeli appeared again before the electors of High Wycombe, and delivered a speech which is remarkable as affording a key to his political career. The following passage indicates its drift and import:—

'The truth is, gentlemen, a statesman is the creature of his age, the child of circumstances, the creation of his times. A statesman is essentially a practical character; and when he is called upon to take office, he is not to inquire what his opinions might or might not have been upon this or that subject: he is only to ascertain the needful, and the beneficial, and the most feasible manner in which affairs are to be carried on. The fact is, the conduct and opinions of public men, at different periods of their career, must not be too curiously contrasted in a free and aspiring country. The

people have their passions, and it is even the duty of public men occasionally to adopt sentiments with which they do not sympathise, because the people must have leaders. Then the opinions and the prejudices of the community must necessarily influence a rising statesman. I say nothing of the weight which great establishments and corporations, and the necessity of their support and patronage, must also possess with an ambitious statesman. . . I laugh, therefore, at the objections against a man, that, at a former period of his career, he advocated a policy different to his present one.

How thoroughly Mr. Disraeli has acted in the spirit of this passage his conduct on the questions of Free Trade and of Reform abundantly show; and the history of the Irish Church will probably soon afford another illustration. 'The people have their passions, and it is even the duty of public men occasionally to adopt sentiments with which they do not sympathise, because the people must have leaders.' There is political morality for you! 'It is *the duty*,' forsooth! 'of public men to adopt the passions of the people,' 'the opinions and prejudices of the community,' 'because the people must have leaders!' I remember a striking passage in one of Plato's Dialogues, in which he compares a democracy demoralised by sophistical demagogues to a raging wild beast which must be caressed, and flattered, and humoured by its keeper. The Greek philosopher's conception of an accomplished demagogue finds its realisation in the person of an English premier. Mr. Disraeli's concrete idea of a constitutional statesman is the keeper of a wild beast, whose 'passions' must be 'adopted' though 'not sympathised with' by the

keeper. How well he has acted this part himself we shall presently see.

But this sketch of the perfect statesman was not the only noteworthy thing in Mr. Disraeli's High Wycombe address. He had then, as now, 'a truly liberal policy' for Ireland. 'Twelve months must not pass,' said he, 'without the very name of tithes in that country being abolished for ever; nor do I deem it less urgent that the Protestant Establishment in that country shall be at once proportioned to the population which it serves.' All his efforts, however, were in vain. Mr. Hume took umbrage at his protégé's suspicious coquetting with the Tories, and publicly withdrew his support. This destroyed any chance that Mr. Disraeli may have had, and he found himself again a beaten candidate for parliamentary honours. A few months later, however, a vacancy occurred in the representation of Taunton, and Mr. Disraeli suddenly appeared upon the scene to oppose Mr. Labouchere, the Whig candidate. Having found that the Radicals would not trust him, and that Mr. O'Connell was in as bad repute at Taunton as he was in good repute at High Wycombe, Mr. Disraeli 'adopted the passions of the people, with which he did not sympathise:' he professed himself a Tory, and denounced his patron, Daniel O'Connell, as 'a bloody traitor'—a piece of coarse ingratitude which drew from Mr. O'Connell a terrific, though equally coarse, chastisement. Mr. Disraeli had to return from Taunton a disappointed candidate, and he soon after commenced a series of letters in the

Times under the signature of 'Runnymede.' These letters it would be difficult to match for blended bombast and scurrility. Let a few examples suffice.

The first letter is addressed to the Prime Minister, Lord Melbourne, whom Mr. Disraeli salutes as 'the sleekest swine in Epicurus' sty.' The sixth letter is addressed to Mr. Spring Rice, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and concludes thus:—

'But, sir, for yourself, with your "business-like talents," which must not be hid under a bushel, it appears to me that it would be both the wisest and the kindest course to entrust to your charge and instruction a class of beings who, in their accomplishments and indefatigableness, alike in their physical and moral qualities, not a little resemble you—the INDUSTRIOUS FLEAS.'

The capitals are Mr. Disraeli's. In another letter, addressed to Lord John Russell, that nobleman is told: 'You have exiled from the Cabinet, by your dark and dishonourable intrigues, every man of talent who could have held you in check.' The names of Lord Cranborne and Lord Carnarvon rise instinctively before one's mind on reading this. 'A miniature Mokahama,' continues Mr. Disraeli, 'you are now exhaling upon the constitution of your country all that long-hoarded venom and all those distempered humours that have for years accumulated in your petty heart, and tainted the current of your mortified existence.'* 'You have revenged yourself upon the

* In 1845, when Mr. Disraeli was courting the support of the Whigs against the Conservative Government, his praise of Lord John Russell was as loud as his abuse of him in 1836. The 'feeble

Sovereign, who recoiled from your touch, by kissing, in spite of his royal soul, his outraged hand.' In the same letter Lord Lansdowne is spoken of as 'the ox-like form of the Lansdowne Apis;' and two other members of the Government are characterised, the one as 'an ape,' the other as 'a cat-like colleague.' 'Palmerston and Grant' (Lord Glenelg) are described as 'two sleek and long-tailed rats;' and 'the Lord Chancellor of this great land is an onion or a cheese.'

'Towering above all' (I am still quoting), 'and resting on a lurid shrine bedewed with blood and encircled with flame, with distended jaws and colossal tail, is the grim figure of the O'Connell crocodile. But, my lord, how thunder-struck must be our visitor when he is told to recognise a Secretary of State in an infinitely small scarabæus!—yes, my lord, when he learns that you are the leader of the English House of Commons, our traveller may begin to comprehend how the Egyptians worshipped AN INSECT.'

Again the capitals are Mr. Disraeli's.

'Letter XI.' is addressed to Lord Palmerston, and opens thus: 'My lord,—The Minister who maintains himself in power in spite of the contempt of a whole nation must be gifted with no ordinary capacity.' A fact which Mr. Disraeli has very recently proved. Lord Palmerston is then compared to 'a favourite footman on easy terms with his mistress.' 'Your lordship's career is as insignificant as your intellect;' 'your crimping lordship;' 'there is one silly head, I

intellect,' the 'insect,' the 'infinitely small scarabæus,' of 1836, is in 1845 'a thoughtful mind and a noble spirit.' And the Whigs appear suddenly metamorphosed from a vile faction to an illustrious and patriotic party.

believe, that it would grieve no one to see added to the heap' of British soldiers who fell in Spain. Such are some of the flowers of rhetoric which Mr. Disraeli addressed to Lord Palmerston.

In another letter Sir John Cam Hobhouse is compared to 'the Puritan and the Prostitute on the banks of Lethe, in Garrick's farce.' In a 'Letter to Lord Glenelg,' that amiable nobleman is called 'a puritanical Sardanapalus.' In a second 'Letter to Viscount Melbourne,' that nobleman and his cabinet are described thus: 'What a crew! I can compare them to nothing but the Swalbach swine in the Brunnen Bubbles, guzzling and grunting in a bed of mire, fouling themselves, and bedaubing every luckless passenger with their contaminating filth.' A third 'Letter to Viscount Melbourne' concludes with a piece of advice which the shade of Lord Melbourne might now reciprocate from Hades:—

'Notwithstanding all your public degradation and all your private annoyances, that man is surely to be envied who has it in his power to confer an obligation on every true-hearted Englishman. And this your lordship still can do: you can yet perform an act which will command the gratitude of every lover of his country; you can—RESIGN.'

The capitals are again Mr. Disraeli's. One singular feature of these letters is the happy manner in which they describe beforehand the political career of Mr. Disraeli himself.

The following passage from 'Letter XVIII.,' addressed 'to the Lord Chancellor,' is a specimen of Mr. Disraeli's versatility and accuracy of knowledge:—

'The administration of justice is still a matter of some importance, and we naturally shrink from the party who have entrusted its conduct to men so notoriously incompetent as a Sugden or a Scarlett; or placed upon the judgment-seat such mere political adventurers as an Alderson and a Parke, a Patteson and a Coleridge, a Taunton and a Tindal.'

But 'Runnymede' can praise as well as censure. Witness 'Letter V. to Sir Robert Peel.' Here is the opening paragraph; and I wonder that it has hitherto escaped the attention of the collectors of elegant extracts:—

'Sir,—Before you receive this letter you will, in all probability, have quitted the halls and bowers of Drayton; those gardens and that library where you have realised the romance of Verulam, and where you enjoy "the lettered leisure" that Temple loved. Your present progress to the metropolis may not be as picturesque as that which you experienced twelve months back, when the confidence of your Sovereign and the hopes of your country summoned you from the galleries of the Vatican and the city of the Cæsars. It may not be as picturesque, but it is not less proud—it will be more triumphant. You are summoned now, like the Knight of Rhodes in Schiller's heroic ballad, as the only hope of a suffering land. The mighty dragon is again abroad, depopulating our fields, wasting our pleasant places, poisoning our fountains, menacing our civilisation. To-day he gorges on Liverpool, to-morrow he riots at Birmingham: as he advances nearer the metropolis, terror and disgust proportionately increase. Already we hear his bellow, more awful than hyæna's; already our atmosphere is tainted with the venomous expirations of his malignant lungs; yet a little while and his incendiary crest will flame on our horizon, and we shall mark the horrors of his insatiable jaws, and the scaly volume of his atrocious tail! In your chivalry alone

is our hope. Clad in the panoply of your splendid talents and your spotless character, we feel assured that you will subdue this unnatural monster; and that we may yet see sedition, and treason, and rapine, rampant as they may have of late figured, quail before your power and prowess.'

Then follows some fulsome adulation about 'those refined delights of fortune which are your inheritance, and which no one is more capable of appreciating, and all those pure charms of social and domestic life to which no one is naturally more attached.'

But what was the beast with the 'insatiable jaws' and the 'atrocious tail,' whose 'scaly volume' put Mr. Disraeli in such a fright? Why, it was our old friend, 'the people,' whose 'passions,' Mr. Disraeli told the electors of High Wycombe, 'it was the duty of a public man to adopt,' though 'not sympathising with them.' But Mr. Disraeli was then a full blown Radical, basking in the sunshine of Daniel O'Connell's and Joseph Hume's favour. He was now a Tory neophyte, paying court to the chief of the Conservative party. 'Justice to Ireland!' and 'Down with the Irish Church!' were Mr. Disraeli's mottoes when wooing the suffrages of High Wycombe with Mr. O'Connell's letter of recommendation in his hand. But 'Runnymede' shouts like a mad Orangeman in favour of 'Protestant ascendancy,' and reviles the Irish as 'our manumitted serfs,' and 'those fanatical slaves.' 'Ireland must be tranquillised,' he exclaims sneeringly. 'So I think. Feed the poor; hang the agitators. That will do it.' Again:—

'These men cannot be conciliated' (he says in his 'Letter

to the House of Lords'). 'They are your foes, because they are the foes of England. They hate our free and fertile isle. They hate our order, our civilisation, our enterprising industry, our sustained courage, our decorous liberty, our pure religion. This wild, reckless, indolent, uncertain, and superstitious race have no sympathy with the English character. Their fair ideal of human liberty is an alternation of clannish broils and coarse idolatry. Their history describes an unbroken circle of bigotry and blood. And now, forsooth, the cry is raised that they have been misgoverned.'

Then follows an outburst about 'this agony of the Protestant cause and the British Empire'—the Dartmouth Letter, in fact, all over. In another of these precious letters the Irish are called 'a horde of manumitted serfs,' and the phrase is several times repeated. In another letter he asks 'Who does not despise the inferior race?' And in the 'Letter to the People' he describes O'Connell's reverence for the Catholic priesthood after this fashion: 'he pressed to his lips those sacred robes reeking with whisky and redolent of incense.'

'The Letters of Runnymede,' be it remembered, were written when Mr. Disraeli was thirty-two years of age; so that he cannot plead even the poor excuse of youthful folly for the disgraceful Billingsgate which forms the staple of his effusions. And the author did not mean the public to regard them as mere fugitive squibs. He fancied himself another Junius, and speaks gravely of his 'Letters' as if they were important contributions to the constitutional history of England. He republished them, therefore, in a

collated form, with a long epistle dedicatory to Sir Robert Peel, and with the following modest motto:—

> 'Neither for shame nor fear this mask he wore,
> That like a vizor in the battle-field,
> But shrouds a manly and a daring brow.'

The dedicatory epistle concludes as follows:—

'Supported in the House of Lords by a body inferior in numbers to the Peers created by the Whigs during the last five years; upheld in the House of Commons by a majority of twenty-six, Lord Melbourne still clings to his mulish and ungenerative position of place without power; and with a degree of modest frankness and constitutional propriety, equally admirable, pledges himself before his country that, as long as he is supported by a majority of the House of Commons, he will remain Minister. I apprehend the ratification of a Ministry is as necessary by one House of Parliament as by the other. The choice of Ministers was once entrusted to a different authority than that of either Lords or Commons. But this is an old almanack; and I leave Lord Viscount Melbourne to shake its dust off at his next interview with his projected Doge of Windsor.'

Who could have imagined that this high-souled politician, this man of delicate honour, who thought it intolerable that a Prime Minister should remain in office with a majority of the Lords against him, though having a majority of the Commons on his side, should himself have remained in office for the best part of a twelvemonth after sustaining three defeats from overwhelming majorities in the House of Commons? Mr. Disraeli's self-forgetfulness is of so sublime a type that he is the vigilant guardian of every statesman's honour but his own. Cato himself could not have inveighed with sterner ire against the

corruptions of the time than Mr. Disraeli did in after years against Sir Robert Peel and Lord John Russell for retaining 'place without power'—that is, with a small majority, in *both* Houses of Parliament, *in their favour*. 'It is gone! that sensibility of principle, that chastity of honour, which felt a stain like a wound;' it has migrated from the Ministerial to the front Opposition bench. At the commencement of his political career Mr. Gladstone laid it down as a rule for his own guidance, never to retain 'place without power,' and always to avow a change of opinion on 'any great constitutional question' on the non-official benches; and most rigidly has he adhered to that rule.

In the last part of the quotation from 'Runnymede's' dedication we have the germ of a most dangerous constitutional doctrine, which Mr. Disraeli has developed more fully in his political novels, and which he has been lately practising to a somewhat alarming extent in his own person. The doctrine amounts to this: Government by means of a grand vizier, wielding power, not from the secure foundation of a nation's confidence, but from the closet of a royal favourite. This is, in sober earnest, the idea of Government which Mr. Disraeli has at various times and in various ways expounded. 'The choice of Ministers was once entrusted to a different authority than that of either Lords or Commons;' and this state of things Mr. Disraeli would gladly bring back. as he distinctly tells us in one of the most recent of his political works, and indeed in all his political essays:—

'In the great heat of parliamentary faction which had prevailed since 1831, the royal prerogative, which unfortunately for the rights and liberties and social welfare of the people had, since 1688, been more or less oppressed, had waned fainter and fainter. A youthful princess on the throne, whose appearance touched the imagination, and to whom her people were generally inclined to ascribe something of that decision of character which becomes those born to command, offered a favourable opportunity to restore the exercise of that regal authority, the usurpation of whose functions has entailed on the people of England so much suffering and so much degradation. . . . . The reaction of public opinion, disgusted with years of parliamentary tumult and the incoherence of party legislation, the balanced state in the kingdom of political parties themselves, the personal character of the Sovereign—these were all causes which intimated that a movement in favour of prerogative was at hand. The leader of the Tory party (Sir Robert Peel) should have vindicated his natural position, and availed himself of the gracious occasion: he missed it.'

Mr. Disraeli wrote this in 1845, and his meaning is by no means obscure. He wishes to restore the royal prerogative as it existed before 1688. He wishes to see again the Sovereign of England in semi-independence of Parliament, and under the dominion of some powerful favourite. And fortune has given Mr. Disraeli 'the gracious occasion' which Sir Robert Peel is said to have 'missed.' How has Mr. Disraeli used that 'gracious occasion?' He is, I believe, the first English Minister of this century, at least, who has dragged his Sovereign's name into the arena of party strife. After his second great defeat this year in the House of Commons, he assumed the

character of a Court favourite, and expressed his intention of remaining in power in that character in opposition to the wish of a large majority of the House of Commons. He kept his word; and his last political act was to turn a Queen's speech into an electioneering placard.

Happily her gracious Majesty is too firmly throned in the affections of her people to suffer in their estimation, even for a moment, through the insidious arts of an unscrupulous Minister—arts which her subjects know are hers in no way. But, nevertheless, these are the means by which thrones are undermined and dynasties overthrown. Reckless, indeed, must that statesman be, and a deadly foe to the English monarchy, who attempts to revive at this time of day the Stuart theory of the royal prerogative—a theory which would not now be endured even in recently despotic Austria, and which has just driven the last of the Bourbon sovereigns an exile from her kingdom. It was with a touching pathos, which went straight to the hearts of her subjects, that our gracious Queen expressed the desolation of her widowhood by comparing it to 'the beginning of a new reign.' Doubly heartless, therefore, must he be who, for his own ambitious ends, would abuse the confidence reposed in him by one who has not only every right to his loyalty, but, in addition, every claim on his chivalrous devotion, since she has no longer by her side the wise and loving counsellor on whose calm judgment she was wont to lean.

Mr. Disraeli has learnt many things; but there is

one thing of which he has remained all through his life in profound ignorance—the character of the English people. No public man in England has ever tried so hard to be always on the winning side, yet no public man of note has succeeded in making so many blunders. And the reason is, that he has invariably looked on England as a cold spectator. He has been among us, but not of us; born and brought up in our midst, yet with his mind cast entirely in a foreign mould. He reads the history of England as Englishmen read the history of Greece or Rome, not as a patriot whose pulse throbs in unison with the varying fortunes of his country. He has great skill in the manufacture and the use of phrases; but we always feel that he is playing a part, and that he has no hearty sympathy with the cause of which he is for the time the advocate. Thus it happens that he has been by turns the apostle and the adversary of almost every political theory which has risen to the surface of English politics for the last forty years. So that, whatever policy he may choose to advocate, he can with truth appeal, in vindication of his consistency, to some former period of his life. Should he hoist the flag of Protestant Ascendancy in Ireland, he can refer with confidence to his 'Letters of Runnymede' and to the first half-dozen years of his parliamentary career. Should he find it convenient, on the other hand, to outbid Mr. Gladstone, is it not written in *Hansard* that he preached, twenty-four years ago, the disestablishment of the Irish Church and at the same time the endowment of the Church of Rome?

No one can have watched his career attentively without observing that the suppressed premiss of all his political reasoning is, not whether a particular policy is true in itself, or good for the country, but whether it will help Mr. Disraeli, or the reverse. Politics is with him a game of ambition, of which the great object is to win. Thus he recently complained of Mr. Gladstone for trying to turn him out before he had 'his innings.' The art of government is, in his view, like the art of horse-racing or cricket, in which the success of the individual is everything, and the welfare of the country goes for nothing. This accounts for that cold and passionless temper of his, which it is the fashion now to praise. Taunts and sarcasms against his inconsistencies glance off his conscience like bullets off the hide of a rhinoceros, because his feelings have never been seriously engaged in any of the questions which he has taken up or laid down as the fortunes of the game might seem to dictate. A man who is profoundly in earnest must show indignation, and sometimes passion, at the sight of wrong triumphant and insincerity successful; but a man who has no lively sympathy with the scenes amidst which he moves may well be cool and collected. People will disagree without warmth about a disputed passage in Plato or Thucydides, but disagreement is apt to develop into a quarrel when the subject of dispute concerns the Holy Scriptures.

An ardent admirer of Mr. Disraeli, who has lately written a pamphlet in glorification of his hero, speaks of him as 'a great neutral figure in English politics.'

The phrase describes, with great accuracy, Mr. Disraeli's attitude in relation to English politics; and Mr. Disraeli has himself drawn a similar portrait of his own position among us. He has insisted very earnestly on his privileged separation from us by the impassable barrier of race. I do not recall this as a reproach to him; on the contrary, his defence of the Jews is the one feature in his character with which I can find it possible to sympathise. So far from thinking less of him because he is a Jew, I should myself be disposed to feel a pride in belonging to a people who have been, in the providence of God, the dispensers of such rich and varied blessings to mankind. But, allowing all this, no one can read Mr. Disraeli's works without feeling that the recoil from the injustice of which the Jews have been victims has driven him into an attitude of morbid hostility to all races which cannot boast a 'Caucasian organisation.' He has all a Pharisee's contempt for the less favoured Gentiles. 'Pure races of Caucasus,' he says in *Coningsby*, 'may be persecuted, but they cannot be despised, except by the brutal ignorance of some mongrel breed, that brandishes fagots and howls extermination, but is itself exterminated by that irresistible law of nature *which is fatal to curs*.' This narrow, repelling Judaism colours his whole conception of Christianity. In truth, his idea of the Christian Church is essentially anti-Christian. If the inspired writers of the Bible, from Moses downwards, impress on the Jews one lesson above all others, it is this—that God did not choose them from among the nations

by reason of any superiority of any kind which they possessed over others; but for the very opposite reason—namely, for the purpose of making his power known by the very contrast of its strength with the feebleness of the vessel wherein it was enshrined. But the Gospel which Mr. Disraeli has preached, with the vehemence of a fanatic, is the antithesis of this. The Jews, according to him, became 'a peculiar people' in virtue of their superior physical organisation. The inspiration of Holy Scripture—nay, the Incarnation itself—becomes, on this theory, a question of physiology.* Mr. Disraeli's homage to the Saviour of mankind has more reference to the Jewish Prince than to the Son of God; and this perverted notion leads him sometimes to the verge of blasphemy; as, for instance, where he says that 'the one-half of Christendom worships a Jew, and the other half a Jewess; and which is the greater race—the race that worships, or the race that is worshipped?'—'*Worships a Jew*;' 'the race that is worshipped.' The religion of Gentile Christendom is thus degraded to the homage paid by an inferior race to a superior, and the Divinity of our Lord is lost in the greater glory of his Caucasian organisation according to the flesh. Hence Mr. Disraeli's interior prepossessions in favour of the Church of Rome, in spite of the No-Popery rabies

* Cf. Tancred; or, the New Crusade, vol. ii. p. 9: 'The Crusaders looked upon the Saracens as infidels; whereas the children of the Desert bore a much nearer affinity to the sacred corpse that had for a brief space consecrated the holy sepulchre than any of the invading host of Europe. *The same blood flowed in their veins*, and they recognised the divine missions both of Moses and his great successor.'

which it suits him at present, as well as in the 'Letters of Runnymede,' to affect.

'The Church of Rome is to be respected' (he says), 'as the only Hebræo-Christian Church extant; all other churches established by the Hebrew Apostles have disappeared, but Rome remains; and we must never permit the exaggerated position which it assumed in the middle centuries to make us forget its early and Apostolic character, when it was fresh from Palestine and fragrant from Paradise.'

The Church of Rome must therefore be maintained in its polity and ritual, since its polity is derived 'by Apostolical succession' from 'the Patriarchs' of Israel, 'and those forms and ceremonies, which the Church of Rome has never relinquished,' were 'ordained' for the worship of the Jews. Even as late as 1849, when he was the recognised leader of the Tory party, he described the Christian Church as 'a sacred corporation for the promulgation and maintenance in Europe of certain Asian principles.' Why 'Asian principles?' If the principles of Christianity are divine and world-embracing, why speak of them as if they were simply the product of 'Asian' genius?

The truth is, as I have already observed, Mr. Disraeli's theory of race is altogether antagonistic to Christianity. The Gospel of Christ broke down the 'middle wall of partition' which divided Jew from Gentile, and Mr. Disraeli has devoted a considerable portion of his life to the vain effort of rebuilding it. It would be unreasonable, therefore, to expect him to feel enthusiastic in defence of the Church of England, since it cannot be positively proved, as in the case of

the Church of Rome, that it was founded by a Jew. His idea of a Church, as 'any religious body of men having an organisation,' reduces it at once to the level of a mere human institution; and Mr. Disraeli will support it just as long as it is likely to advance his own interests. No gratitude for past services would stay his hand from disestablishing the Church of England if he thought that he could thereby prolong his own tenure of office. Witness his recent attack on the Ritualists. They have served him faithfully for years. Their first organ, the *Union* newspaper, was from the day of its birth till the day of its death a zealous supporter of Mr. Disraeli; and the *Church Times*, the *Church News*, and the *Union Review*—the present organs of the party—have all along preached the duty of loyalty to Mr. Disraeli; and that duty the Ritualists have discharged most ungrudgingly. After the Oxford election of 1865, the *Standard* boasted that the success of Mr. Gathorne Hardy was due to the support of the 'Ultra-Ritualists.' But the Ritualists *are down* just now—so, at least, thinks Mr. Disraeli; and therefore, without the least scruple, he hounds on the mob against them; and not only so, but very coolly says that Mr. Gladstone is at the head of this fell conspiracy, this 'supernatural confederacy,' which actually has 'its hand on the throne of England,' but which the Right Honourable Benjamin Disraeli, 'by the favour of his Sovereign,' is determined to defeat. With this view, he has recently unfurled 'a banner with a strange device'—'the Protestant Church of Europe,'* and in

* Speech at Merchant Taylors' Banquet.

the tones of an Eastern Potentate calls upon 'all peoples, nations, and languages' to hasten to the rescue. If Mr. Disraeli had possessed even a tyro's knowledge of the English character, he would have known that this wild *slogan* of a despairing chieftain would have been laughed at by all except a handful of bigots from Exeter Hall.

His contempt for the English Church is, however, a trifle less pronounced than his scorn for the English aristocracy. Let any one read *Coningsby* and *Sybil*, and he will see what the nobility of England, the 'fat graziers' as Mr. Disraeli calls them, have to expect from their present chief should he find it convenient to raise again, in a direction they little anticipate, the cry against 'hard and fast ~~lines~~.' Our oldest peers are, of course, but *parvenus* of yesterday in the eyes of a 'Mosaic Arab' (to quote Mr. Disraeli's description of himself), who proudly boasts that 'Damascus had municipal institutions when Birkenhead was a swamp.' The English aristocracy find no place in his ideal scheme of government. 'Two great existences,' he says, 'have been blotted out of the history of England—the Monarch and the Multitude;' and these 'two great existences' Mr. Disraeli considers it his mission to restore: a monarch independent of Parliament, and the tool of a designing minister; and a multitude dazzled by the pageantry of a despotic government and cajoled by the intrigues of a grand vizier. Fortunately for England, however, Queen Victoria learnt the duties of a constitutional sovereign from a wiser head than Mr. Disraeli's; and the

English 'Multitude' are not a rabble of Oriental slaves, but a free and an intelligent people, who are too proud of their nobility to wage a socialistic war against them in obedience to Mr. Disraeli's revolutionary tocsin. I use the word 'revolutionary' deliberately, for Mr. Disraeli's neo-Toryism is a far more revolutionary creed than that of Chartism. *Sybil* is a book addressed to the ignorant passions of the multitude. Its object is to set the lower classes against the aristocracy. What else can be the meaning of telling the working classes that they are a nation of oppressed 'serfs,' 'ground down by an aristocracy composed of those who plundered the Church in the reign of Henry VIII.,' those 'who plundered India in the reign of George III.,' and those 'who plundered the nation in the reign of George IV.'—'fat graziers and second-rate squires.' What else can be the meaning of Mr. Disraeli's aphorism—that 'the rights of labour are as sacred as those of property,' and 'if a difference is to be established, the interests of the living ought to be preferred'? All experience shows, the experience of the French Revolution especially, that there is no surer method of rousing the multitude to a general war against private property than to persuade them that private property is at once the offspring of plunder and an instrument of oppression. Invectives against the French nobility, in a similar strain with Mr. Disraeli's invectives against the nobility of England, were the heralds of the French Revolution. Mr. Disraeli would be a very dangerous demagogue if his hold on popular feeling were stronger

than it is. In his unpopularity lies the safety of those Tory peers who are at once the subjects of his satire and the stepping-stones of his ambition.

But it is not wonderful that Mr. Disraeli should display such ignorance of the English character, for he has only a superficial knowledge of human nature. He has described himself with such singular felicity in the 'Letters of Runnymede,' while meaning to describe Mr. O'Connell, that I cannot do better than quote the passage:—

'He is shrewd, vigorous, versatile, *with great knowledge of character, little of human nature*; with that reckless dexterity which confounds weak minds, and that superficial readiness that masters vulgar passions; inexhaustible in unprincipled expedients, and audacious in irresponsible power; a *Nisi Prius* lawyer, with the soul of a demagogue. That is the man.'

No man, at the age of thirty-two, with a tolerable knowledge of human nature, could have persuaded himself that he was paying a compliment to a distinguished statesman, and that statesman one so sensitively alive to moral decorum as Sir Robert Peel, by dedicating to him the 'Letters of Runnymede.' But it took Mr. Disraeli seven years more to discover that he had created in the mind of Sir Robert Peel, not gratitude, but unconquerable aversion.

Soon after the publication of Runnymede as 'a volume' that might 'conduce not only to the amusement, but to the instruction of my countrymen,' Mr. Disraeli realised the dream of his life, and was elected member of Parliament for Maidstone. He proclaimed

himself at once a supporter of Sir Robert Peel, whom he 'was proud to follow.' Occasionally, indeed, his old Radicalism still asserted its dominion over him. Sir Robert Peel supported the Whig Government in putting down the Chartist riots which then broke out in different parts of the country; but Chartism found a valiant champion in Mr. Disraeli. He opposed the County Constabulary Bill, and indeed all the measures which the Government brought forward to secure the peace of the country. In the vote on the Birmingham Police Bill he went into the lobby against it accompanied by two extreme Radicals. In one of his speeches he threw out a hint to the Chartists that their treason might possibly be successful if they could only get an aristocratic leader, a democratic Tory of the type of Bolingbroke, 'the father of modern Toryism.' 'When Wat Tyler failed, Henry Bolingbroke changed a dynasty.'

But, with the exception of this temporary return to his first love, Mr. Disraeli continued an enthusiastic follower of Sir Robert Peel. His eloquence exhaled in clouds of incense to his chief—the most consistent, the most patriotic, and one of the greatest, if not the greatest, of English statesmen, in the opinion of his admiring disciple. This lasted till the autumn of 1843. Mr. Disraeli then thought that six years' adulation was entitled to its reward, and he communicated to Sir R. Peel, through a third party, his wish to have a subordinate office in the Government. Sir Robert coldly declined. This is a matter of history, for Sir Robert told the story in the House of Commons

three years later, after one of Mr. Disraeli's savage attacks on him; and Mr. Disraeli indirectly admitted the truth of it. 'A conversation took place,' he admitted in reply, but 'under the seal of confidence.' 'It is possible that if in 1841' (when the Conservatives came into office) 'I had been offered some slight office (for that was all I could have expected), I should have accepted it.' The moment Mr. Disraeli discovered that all his panegyrics on Sir Robert Peel were thrown away, he went into opposition, spoke against every measure which he had previously advocated, and commenced a series of personal attacks on the Minister, which, for unscrupulous ferocity, are happily unparalleled in the annals of the English Parliament. Till August 19, 1843, Mr. Disraeli had eulogised Sir Robert Peel as a paragon of patriotism and of political consistency; that night he made the sudden discovery that Sir Robert was the incarnation of all that was perfidious, base, and despicable in English politics. A few weeks before, Mr. Disraeli had been a fervid Free-trader, and had delivered one of those philosophico-historical speeches in which he occasionally indulges, with the object of proving that Free-Trade was always one of the principles of the Tory party. At this time Mr. Disraeli had an idea that Sir R. Peel was going to advocate Free-Trade, and he had not yet quarrelled with the Prime Minister. When he did quarrel with him, he delivered a speech to prove that the Tories had always been Protectionists; in fact, he worked himself up into a fit of fictitious fanaticism in favour of what he called 'the

sacred cause of Protection.' In June 1852 the curtain again rose on a new transformation scene. Mr. Disraeli appeared as Chancellor of the Exchequer, and finding 'the sacred cause of Protection' incompatible with his retention of office, he discovered for the second time that the Tories were always Free-Traders at heart; and he made also another discovery, which, *suo more*, he elevated to the rank of a 'principle.' 'The spirit of the age,' he said, 'tends to free intercourse, and no statesman can disregard with impunity the genius of the epoch in which he lives.'

And this is the immaculate apostle of 'principle,' who exhausted the affluence of his vituperative powers on Sir Robert Peel for conforming to 'the epoch in which he lived!' Well might the Marquis of Granby exclaim that if Mr. Disraeli's new policy was right, 'some reparation was due to the memory of Sir Robert Peel' for the venomous sarcasms of him who was now doing the very thing of which he had falsely accused Sir Robert Peel. On the evening of January 22, 1846, Mr. Disraeli told the House of Commons that Sir Robert Peel was 'a man who never originates an idea, a mere watcher of the atmosphere, a man who takes his observations, and when he finds the wind veers towards a certain quarter, trims to suit.' Like the Turkish admiral who, during the war in the Levant, had steered his fleet into the port of the enemy, Sir Robert Peel had undertaken to fight for Protection, and wished to carry his followers into the opposite camp of Free Trade. But there was one Admirable Crichton who was ready to lead the forlorn

hope of Protection—one man who would go to the stake sooner than betray 'the sacred cause of Protection.' 'I believe,' cried the impassioned orator, in tones of sublime despair, 'I believe I belong to a party which can triumph no more, for we have nothing left us but the constituencies which we have *not* betrayed.' At two o'clock on the morning of Saturday, November 27, 1852, Sir Robert Peel was amply avenged. Every one felt that his assailant was then reluctantly doing penance for those remorseless personalities with which he had laboured for years to destroy the character of one of the most conscientious statesmen who ever held office in England. 'If you wish to see humiliation,' said Mr. Sidney Herbert, 'look there'—pointing at Mr. Disraeli.

Mr. Disraeli has once again discovered a 'sacred cause' for which he is prepared to do 'uncompromising' battle. Protestant ascendancy in Ireland now occupies the place which Protection occupied twenty-four years ago. The same authority, who now declares that the disestablishment of the Irish Church will endanger the monarchy of England, then pronounced the same opinion with regard to Free Trade. The Address just issued to the electors of Buckinghamshire breathes the same tone as the Protectionist philippics of 1843–6. 'Principle' is again in the ascendant; and it was only the other day that Mr. Disraeli rebuked Mr. Bright for speaking respectfully of 'the spirit of the age.' But, unfortunately, past experience has taught us that Mr. Disraeli's professions of 'uncompromising resistance' are always loudest just when he is about to strike his flag. It was so in the

case of Free Trade; it was so in the case of Reform; and it will be so in the case of the Irish Church.

'The attacks upon the State (said Mr. Disraeli to his constituents in 1865), never conducted with so much energy, have nevertheless been more prolonged; and it was only a few nights ago when the House of Commons, impatient of protracted mystification, reflected the candour of the community, and declared by a vast majority that the franchise in boroughs should not be lowered, and that the principle on which Lord Derby wished to extend it was the just one.' These democratic 'attacks,' he declares, were 'signally defeated' by himself and his party.

'We were of opinion (says Mr. Disraeli to his constituents in his Address of October 1, 1868) that this state of affairs'—namely, Tory opposition to the 'lowering of the franchise in boroughs'—'should terminate; and by a series of measures, in the course of two years, we brought about a settlement of the question, broad in its principles, large and various in its provisions.'

'On the extension of the electoral franchise depends (said Mr. Disraeli's manifesto of 1865) the distribution of political power. It appears to me that the primary plan of our ancient constitution, so rich in various wisdom, indicates the course that we ought to pursue in this matter. It secured our popular rights by entrusting power, *not to an indiscriminate multitude*, but to the estate or order of the Commons; and a wise Government should be careful that the elements of that estate should bear a due relation to the moral and material development of the country. Public opinion may not, perhaps, be yet ripe enough to legislate on this subject, but it is sufficiently interested in the question to ponder over it with advantage; so that when the time comes for action, we may legislate in the spirit of the English constitution, *which would absorb the best of every class, and not fall into a democracy*, which is the tyranny of one class, *and that one the least enlightened.*'

'The consequence of what you call a moderate reduction of the borough franchise (said Mr. Disraeli on the third reading of his Reform Bill, July 15, 1867) would have been that a certain portion of the working classes—a favoured portion—always spoken of in this House and everywhere else publicly in terms of great eulogium and fed with "soft dedications all day long"—were to be assured that they were very much superior to any other portion of the working classes, and therefore they were to be invested with the franchise on the implied condition that they were to form a sort of Prætorian guard in order to prevent another portion of the working classes from getting the franchise. This system of policy, under different shapes and in different degrees, was constantly before the public. *We were highly opposed to it.* We believed it was a dangerous policy—more dangerous to the institutions of the country than if we admitted into the political arena the *great body of the working classes*, who in all probability would have a more extensive sympathy with our political institutions, which, if they are in a healthy state, ought to command popular sympathy because they are the embodiment of the popular requirements of the country. It did appear to us that if there were to be great changes in the constituent body, there was a better chance of arriving at a more patriotic and national feeling by largely increasing the body to be admitted than by admitting a favoured section, who, by the manner in which they were treated, and from the particular qualities ascribed to them, were more likely to be raised up to become critics of our institutions than supporters of them.'

'Over-refinement and over-education (said Mr. Disraeli last July)* lead very often to a perversity of opinion and an affectation of philosophy, that does not deal with those vigorous and robust principles, upon which the nation is now called upon to decide, with the success and completeness

* Speech at the Lord Mayor's banquet, July 29, 1868.

which we find applies to a larger and more national constituency:' therefore he 'thinks' the destiny of the empire 'is safer in their (the 'indiscriminate multitude's') hands than it would have been in a more contracted circle, probably of a more refined and delicate character.'

With these facts before me, I should receive very little comfort, if I were in favour of the Irish Establishment, from the perusal of Mr. Disraeli's manifesto of last Thursday; on the contrary, I should begin to tremble for the safety of the Irish Establishment the moment I heard Mr. Disraeli offering his 'uncompromising resistance' to his political opponents; judging by the past, I should at once conclude that this was the prelude to a more revolutionary scheme than any which Mr. Gladstone has in contemplation. And my misgivings would be very much increased when I recalled Mr. Disraeli's Irish speeches of 1844. The following passages would be anything but reassuring:

'If the connection with England prevents a revolution, and revolution is the only remedy (as he had previously said it was), England logically is in the position of being the cause of all the misery of Ireland. . . . Justice to Ireland was then said to mean identity of institutions with England. He believed that to be the greatest fallacy that could be brought forward. He always thought that the greatest cause of misery in Ireland was the identity of institutions with England. Surely we had given them similar institutions more than enough. How could people ask for an identity of institutions when the very primary and most important institution of all—the union of Church and State—was opposed by the Irish people? . . . He said that instead of having an identity of institutions, they should get rid of all those English institutions which they had

forced on that country.' 'Ireland is a country in great distress; it has an established Church that is not the Church of the people, and a territorial aristocracy, the richest of which lives in distant capitals. Ireland has a starving population, an absentee aristocracy, an alien Church, and the weakest executive in the world. That is the Irish Question.'

And what was Mr. Disraeli's remedy? Read his speech of February 16, 1844, and you will see. 'The Tories,' he said, were 'the natural allies of the Irish people.' When the Tory party was led by the 'injured Bolingbroke,' the Roman Catholics were always in the ranks of the Tories. He would have the Tories, therefore, form a coalition with the Roman Catholics of Ireland. O'Connell was again a great patriot in the eyes of Mr. Disraeli. 'With that great man,' he said in a later speech, 'my feelings with respect to Ireland fully sympathised.' And this coalition being effected, the rest was easy. The true policy for Ireland was a return to the Convention of Kilkenny, in 'the secret articles of which Charles I. agreed that the Roman Catholics should not be called on to take the oaths of supremacy; and with reference to the Protestant Church—that there should be a recognised equality between the two Churches. These were the articles which Charles I. by his word of honour ratified.' 'He was content to tread in the old path, the natural way, he repeated, of the democracy of England . . . Let them recur to the benignant policy of Charles I.; then they might settle Ireland with honour to themselves, with kindness to the people, and with safety to the realm.' 'He wanted

Ireland settled upon principles analogous to those which were laid down by a great statesman in 1636.'*

Now, what was, in reality, 'the benignant policy' of Charles I. ? and who was the 'great statesman' who was to give effect to that policy ? Hallam shall tell us :—

'These suspicions (against Charles's good faith) were much aggravated by a second discovery that took place soon afterwards, of a secret treaty between the Earl of Glamorgan and the confederate Irish Catholics, not merely promising the repeal of penal laws, *but the establishment of their religion in far the greater part of Ireland.* . . . . Glamorgan's (Mr. Disraeli's "great statesman's") treaty granted them all the churches, with the revenues thereof, of which they had at any time since October 1641 been in possession ; that is, the re-establishment of their religion.'†

Mr. Disraeli still believes, 'in his historical conscience,' that 'the benignant policy of Charles I.' is the right policy for Ireland, and he attempted to 'recur' to it in the spring of the present year. Here we have an authoritative explanation of what Mr. Disraeli meant by 'levelling up.' He meant the endowment and establishment of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland, together with such 'modifications' of the present Establishment as would make its total disestablishment a mere question of time, and of a very short time too. That this was the hope which he held out to the Roman Catholics of Ireland and to the authorities at Rome is a matter of certainty. It was in the summer of last year that he 'recurred'

* *Hansard*, vol. lxxii. pp. 1009, 1013. † Const. Hist. i. 612.

to the policy adumbrated in 1844—'the benignant policy of Charles I.' A hint was given to the Roman Catholics in this country that if they would only support the Government, and help to keep it in during the perils of the Reform campaign, they would be rewarded in due time with 'a truly liberal policy.' The nature of that policy is indicated in the following extract from the ablest and most influential Roman Catholic journal published in this country—the *Tablet*:—

'We are of those who think that the notion of settling the Irish Church question by simply confiscating the property of the Protestant Church, and abolishing its privileges, is a foolish notion, and ought to be opposed as foolish, futile, and wrong. There are those who hold, as we do, that . . . the re-settlement of the affairs of the Catholic Church in Ireland should receive Parliamentary sanction, after an arrangement and an understanding had been come to by the Government of Her Majesty with the only authority competent to give consent thereto—we mean the Pope of Rome. We think it would be a good thing if this arrangement included such terms as that the Catholic Archbishops of Ireland should have seats in the House of Lords; that lands should be purchased by the State, and settled upon the Secs of the Irish Catholic Archbishops and Bishops; also upon Catholic Deaneries, Chapters, and Ecclesiastical Seminaries; also that glebe lands should be purchased by the State, and settled to the use of the Irish Catholic incumbents in Irish parishes; also that the State should grant an endowment to an Irish Catholic University.'

This sketch of Mr. Disraeli's forthcoming policy was published in May last year; and up to the present moment the *Tablet* has laboured with extraordinary

skill to persuade the Roman Catholic Members of Parliament that the wisest policy is to support Mr. Disraeli.

Another piece of evidence, which has already found its way into the press, is still more remarkable. I happened to be in Italy when Mr. Disraeli became Prime Minister, and I observed with some surprise that his advent to power was hailed with a very unusual degree of enthusiasm by the official journals of Rome. The ablest of these journals, the *Osservatore Romano*, published a long article on 'the New Premier of England,' and undertook to show, by an elaborate comparison of Mr. Disraeli's utterances on Church questions with the propositions of the Pope's *Syllabus*, that Mr. Disraeli and Pio Nono were, in fact, agreed on all essential questions of Church policy, and that a new era was about to dawn on the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland in consequence of Mr. Disraeli's accession to the Premiership. Meanwhile Mr. Gladstone gave notice of his Resolutions; and forthwith the *Osservatore Romano* came out with an article entitled 'Sir Gladstone and the Revolution in Italy.' That article attributed to Mr. Gladstone the downfall of the Bourbon dynasty and the triumph of the Liberal cause generally in Italy, and held him up to the reprobation of all Catholics. His proposal to disestablish the Irish Church was denounced as being really injurious to the Catholic Church in Ireland, and as frustrating in particular Mr. Disraeli's 'benignant policy,' of which the outline was given. That outline was substantially the same as that delineated in the extract which I have given from

the *Tablet;* but it had this additional feature, that the endowment of the Roman Catholic Church was to be partly effected by giving it some of the property now enjoyed by the Protestant Establishment. The *Osservatore* declared emphatically that Mr. Disraeli's plan would not be 'what is called *paying the clergy*,' and hinted that it would be some endowment over which the hierarchy was to have an absolute control. The following extract, in the trenchant language of the original, will give you an idea of the Irish policy conceived twenty-five years ago, and offered to Rome a few months since, by the Minister who now appeals to the fanaticism of the unreflecting mob against our Catholic fellow-Christians in Ireland, and degrades his high position as Prime Minister of England to the level of the notorious Murphy—the only difference being, that Murphy is probably a sincere ignorant bigot, while Mr. Disraeli's predilections, as far as he has any, are all in favour of the Church of Rome.

'Il gabinetto Disraeli, che certo non ama troppo la rivoluzione neppure in Italia, s' oppose alla proposta di abolire la chiesa anglicana in Irlanda, fatta da Gladstone collo scopo di abbattere il gabinetto *tory*, e non solo per vantaggiare i cattolici irlandesi. Il rigetto della proposta di Gladstone, che si crede certo, servirà a rendere il gabinetto Disraeli meno sollecito nel provvedere allo scioglimento della quistione irlandese. *Invece, senza l' intervento di Sir Gladstone, il ministro Disraeli era pronto a soddisfare alle giuste esigenze dei cattolici* FINO ALL' ABOLIZIONE, CON MODI INDIRETTI, DELLA CHIESA ANGLICANA IN IRLANDA, *come ha proposto Gladstone. È noto in fatti,* che Lord Mayo, ministro, avea promesso di abolire in Irlanda la proibizione tuttora

vigente relativa ai titoli dei vescovi cattolici. Il Cardinal Wiseman evitava ogni difficoltà prendendo il titolo di arcivescovo A Westminster, invece di chiamarsi arcivescovo DI Westminster. *Oggi il ministero acconsente che in Irlanda si muti il fatto in diritto ed è pronto a riconoscere l' arcivescovo cattolico* DI *Dublino.**

'Ora essendo riconosciuto l' arcivescovo cattolico di Dublino, basta fare un solo passo per riconoscere eziando il suo *arcivescovato,* ed assegnargli *una congrua dotazione con tutti i suoi diritti temporali, come esige la stessa logica. Il gabinetto di Londra adunque avrebbe riconosciuto la chiesa cattolica in Irlanda; le avrebbe restituito almeno una parte dei beni rapiti; i diritti della stessa chiesa cattolica quindi si sarebbero estesi nello stesso campo al presente usurpato dalla chiesa anglicana, la quale avrebbe veduto necessariamente ristretti i suoi privilegi e così sarebbe bastata forse una semplice legge di contabilità, che togliesse le somme dal governo inglese assegnate ai prelati eretici in Irlanda,* PER ABOLIRE QUELLA CHIESA ANGLICANA IN IRLANDA INDIRETTAMENTE, *che Sir Gladstone vuole supprimere direttamente,* e prima di tutto per puntigli ministeriali.'

No one knows better than Mr. Disraeli the supreme nonsense of his wild rhetoric about 'the ultimate triumph, were our Church to fall, of that power which would substitute for the authority of our Sovereign the supremacy of a foreign prince.' 'The Crown has not supremacy in any matter of doctrine. *That the Crown has no authority whatever to assert.*' Such is the dictum of an eminent lawyer whom even Mr. Disraeli will scarcely venture to accuse of being 'in open confederacy' with 'High Church Ritualists and Irish Romanists' against the supremacy of the Crown.

* The last two words are in italics in the original.

The words which I have quoted were spoken by Lord Westbury in the House of Lords, in the presence of Mr. Disraeli's Lord Chancellor, on July 16, in a short debate on the 'Promissory Oaths Bill.' But if 'the Crown has not supremacy in any matter of doctrine,' what possible bearing can the royal supremacy have on the supremacy of the Pope in this country, seeing that the latter supremacy is altogether a 'matter of doctrine?' Does Mr. Disraeli mean to say that the members of the Established Church in Ireland are so contemptibly helpless, that the moment their Church is severed from the State they will fall prostrate under the dominion of the Pope, as humming birds are said to be fascinated into the open jaws of the rattlesnake? Have the Presbyterians of Ulster fallen victims to 'the supreme purpose,' of this 'one power?' And what of English Churchmen and Protestants generally throughout our colonies, to say nothing of other countries where there is no established church?

The disestablishment of the Church in Ireland will promote the establishment of the Pope's supremacy in its place just as much as it will promote the establishment of the supremacy of the Grand Llama of Thibet. It is, in fact, the existence of the Irish establishment which has brought Ireland, more than any country in Europe, under the dominion of the Pope's supremacy. It is really difficult to treat seriously and with patience an argument which is, in plain truth, the concentrated essence of absurdity.

But we all know what all this will end in. Mr. Disraeli has waited to see how churchmen would re-

ceive the recommendations of the Irish Church Commission, and having satisfied himself that the verdict is unfavourable, he has boldly cried, 'No surrender.' By and by he will have to face a hostile majority. He will then declare himself willing to bow to the clearly expressed will of 'those vigorous and robust' electors whose ignorance he belauded the other day as a 'safer' guide to legislation than the 'over-refinement and over-education' in which the higher orders are sunk. He will say again that, in his judgment, 'the time has arrived when the question of Ireland ought no longer to involve the fate of ministers.' He will protest that he is not 'angling for a policy'—far from it; but he has unbounded confidence in the 'unerring instinct' of Parliament, and will be most happy to develop any policy which the collective wisdom of the House may suggest.

Should this manœuvre fail, as it is exceedingly likely to do, Mr. Disraeli will play his last card. He will outbid Mr. Gladstone. He will appeal to the extreme Liberationists. He will declare that 'no statesman can disregard with impunity the genius of the epoch in which he lives;' that 'the spirit of the age tends to' religious freedom; that it is a mistake to disestablish the Irish Church, but that if it is to be disestablished, it ought to be entirely disendowed, both because this will draw forth the self-sacrificing liberality of its members, which is now wasting itself 'in distant capitals' for want of objects at home on which to spend itself; and also because it would be dangerous to leave so powerful a corporation in pos-

session of so much wealth when no longer under the control of the State. Finally, he will exclaim, in a burst of self-immolating patriotism, 'Pass this measure, and then turn us out, if you like;' forgetting that he has succeeded in persuading the House of Commons that to 'turn him out' is an operation which requires nothing short of a physical effort.

This is no fancy picture, as the following quotation from the *John Bull* of September 12 will show:—

'Now, if the Church is disestablished, if her connection with the State is dissolved, if unhappy Ireland is to be left without any national recognition of God, any national machinery for asking His protection and deprecating His judgment, then we say that the preservation of her endowments, coupled with slavery (for such it would be without the privileges of an Establishment of which money is not the chief), is not that for which the Conservative Churchman need contend. *A more sweeping measure than Mr. Gladstone's may be the truest policy, as it was in the Reform question.* . . . Here is the real difficulty of the question. It would have required great boldness to adopt this unpopular course. It will take a great deal of educating before the Conservative party will, with few exceptions, see its wisdom. . . . Time will probably show that Mr. Disraeli sees this, though his party are not educated enough to take it in at present.'

The *John Bull* is the weekly organ of the Government, and the article from which this extract is taken was copied in a prominent place by Mr. Disraeli's own special organ, the *Globe.*

In fine, the case stands thus:—Everybody admits that *some* policy must be applied to the solution of the Irish question next session. The leader of the

Opposition has announced, in plain and unequivocal language, what his policy is. Granting that *something* must be done, Mr. Gladstone's policy is, beyond comparison, not only the most feasible and the most likely to give satisfaction, but it is by far the most generous that the Irish Church can hope for. The moment she is disestablished, Mr. Gladstone has emphatically declared that she must have complete freedom.* Every member of the late Government who referred to the matter at all made the same declaration. Mr. Bright also, who will certainly be one of the most influential men in the next Liberal Government, has said repeatedly and in emphatic language that justice requires that the Irish Church, when disestablished, should have as much liberty as any Dissenting community. Mr. Coleridge, it is true, used language at Exeter which seemed to mean that he would disestablish the Irish Church and still keep her in State bonds; but in a subsequent speech he said plainly that when the Irish Church was disestablished and partially disendowed she would be left to manage her own affairs.

Everybody must admit, too, that Mr. Gladstone has shown every disposition to deal generously with the Irish Church in the matter of endowments. The following letter to a gentleman who wrote to him on the subject indicates the spirit in which he is prepared to act:—

* 'As to the Irish Church itself, I expressed the opinion that, having been deprived of legal privilege and position, it should be invested with perfect freedom.'—Mr. Gladstone's Speech in moving the second reading of the Suspensory Bill, May 22.

'11, Carlton-house-terrace, July 16, 1868.

'SIR—By reference to my speeches in the House of Commons, any one who takes the trouble will find that no enactment on the subject of a distinction between different kinds of endowment, nor on the disposal of any endowment whatever, has yet been proposed by me, but that I have freely declared that, in my opinion, it will be desirable to respect all the private endowments of the Established Church of Ireland, and to interpret the phrase private endowments liberally.

'I am, &c.,

'R. Rushton, Esq. 'W. E. GLADSTONE.

'You are at liberty to make whatever use of this letter you may think fit.'

And signs are not wanting to show that Liberals of the most extreme views on ecclesiastical matters are ready to support Mr. Gladstone in this policy of generosity. The *Nonconformist*, the organ of the Liberationists, in a recent number expressed itself thus:—

'Mr. Gladstone's policy will be, under any conceivable circumstances, a painful one for the members of the Irish Church; but there is not only no necessity, there is neither justice nor expediency, in applying it as if it were one of retribution. It ought not in any sense to be penal, at any rate as far as the motives and efforts of its abettors are concerned. It may be likened to a severe surgical operation, in which the most delicate handling is as loudly called for as unflinching decision. The wounds which are made must also be bound up. The Church which, after all, has been but a too willing instrument of the vicious policy of the State, ought not, because the State has discovered its mistake, to be thrown at once upon the helplessness which its position has fostered. Somebody or other ought to care for it in its novel circumstances, to minister comfort to it, to wrap it round with a sensibly warm affection, to tend it assiduously through

its days of weakness, and to let it see that it is not abandoned. If, for example, the English hierarchy, instead of fighting to the last against the inevitable, were to begin the better and more useful work of preparing for it—if, instead of busying themselves in obstructing a great act of national justice, they were to take steps towards averting its painful consequences—if, knowing, as they must know, that the Irish Church must soon become a voluntary Church, they were to engage not to desert her when the appointed hour of trial comes, and were now to devise plans by which the Protestantism of this country might be induced to contribute of its wealth towards the support of the institution which has so long and so unfortunately represented Protestantism in the sister isle—they might make the transition of the Anglican community from dependence on State favour and public endowments to self-reliance and Christian willinghood well nigh painless. *If it would do any real and permanent good to the Anglicans in Ireland, without at the same time tending to frustrate the object of national conciliation, we believe there would be no indisposition on the part of Liberationists to make them a present of* THE WHOLE *of the ecclesiastical property now in their possession.* They have consented to their retention of so much of it as may be required to satisfy personal and vested interests, and they have done so ungrudgingly. They have gone further. They have acquiesced in leaving in the hands of the Irish Church all the national ecclesiastical edifices of which she can make a proper use, and several other means of accommodation which will serve to give her a fair start as a voluntary organisation.'

Mr. Miall himself spoke as follows three weeks ago:—

'The question (he said) which would soon come down to us from the Throne was as to what we were prepared to do to maintain the union with Ireland. He, like the candidates, was in favour of a policy of conciliation through

justice. Neither the establishment of the Church of England nor the principle of church establishment was at issue now; it was simply a matter of political justice to the people of Ireland. *Nothing was proposed to be taken from the Irish Church but her ascendancy by law*; and what was wanted was to place her on a level with other sects, trusting in the measure of God's truth that was within her to sustain her in competition with other denominations.'

And with regard to the disestablishment of the Irish Church involving as a consequence that of England, it may be permitted to ask on what data such a conclusion is founded. I suppose that no one is looked up to by the Dissenters with so much confidence as Mr. Bright; and Mr. Bright has always set his face against the disestablishment of the English Church. In a speech at a meeting of the National Reform Association in May 1850 he said, 'It is not my conviction that the moment we obtain a reformed Parliament we should upset the Established Church, because it is a question of argument whether or not there should be an Established Church.' Thus, you see, Mr. Bright himself has no objection abstractedly to an Established Church; and with reference to the special instance of the English Church, he has repeatedly said that the Establishment constitutes no grievance to the Dissenters. The sentiment of the following extract from the speech which he delivered on the Irish Church last summer has been expressed by him on various occasions during the last twenty years:—

'In England the Established Church is, at least, as old as Dissent; and at the time Dissent came into existence, or became a power in this country, or just previous to that time,

the Established Church was the Church of the whole people. That Church did not confiscate the property of Dissenters, or any ecclesiastical fund which they, as Dissenters, had ever possessed. The Established Church remained, as it had been, a great establishment of the State, and men who held different opinions, the Nonconformists of that day, gradually withdrew from it because they found in their own organizations what to them was capable of affording greater solace in the performance of their own worship. They did not feel that the clergy and the people about the Church had—I speak of the great bulk—turned them out, or confiscated their revenues, or supplanted them; but they withdrew voluntarily from the Established Church; and although they might not believe that an Established Church was a good thing, yet, as long as it remained a great institution of the nation, supported by the great majority of the nation, they felt that it was not in any degree a special grievance which might justify them in disloyalty, discontent, or insurrection. But in Ireland the case was wholly different.'

So much for Mr. Gladstone's policy. But what is the policy of the Government? Conservative candidates hitherto, while denouncing Mr. Gladstone's policy, have assumed that their own leader had *some* policy for Ireland. They have referred vaguely to the Irish Church Commission, and promised to support any measure of reform in the Irish Church which should still leave it established, however much it might be 'modified.' Now their oracle has spoken; and what does he tell them? Simply that they are to 'offer an uncompromising resistance' to Mr. Gladstone. But does any man out of Bedlam suppose that any ministry can stand for a week in the new Parliament on a policy of inaction? Mr. Disraeli proposes to do

nothing. He intends to watch events and take his cue from the elections. He takes the same view of the Irish Church that honest Abraham Lincoln took of slavery while victory was oscillating in the balance. 'If I can restore the Union,' said the shrewd President, 'by upholding slavery, I will uphold slavery; if I can restore the Union by abolishing slavery, I will abolish slavery.' If Mr. Disraeli can keep himself in office by maintaining the Irish Establishment, he will maintain the Irish Establishment; if he can keep his place by abolishing it, he will abolish it. His antecedents show that he is at all times ready to form a coalition with any section, however extreme, that will help him to a party triumph. But I believe that the day of retribution is at hand, and that the reviler of Sir Robert Peel will soon have an opportunity of ruminating on the strange vicissitudes of fortune as he recalls the following passage in one of his most ruthless invectives against the minister whom he was once 'proud to follow':—

> 'The right honourable gentleman must feel at the present moment, when we are about again to divide on an Irish question—a division which may be fatal to his power—he must feel that it is a Nemesis which dictates this vote and regulates this decision, and that it is about to stamp with its seal the catastrophe of a sinister career.'

The clergy and laity of the Irish Church, then, have two courses before them. They may close with Mr. Gladstone's offer, and secure an exceedingly good bargain; or they may join in Mr. Disraeli's 'uncompromising resistance,' and by prolonging the struggle

exasperate the Liberals, who are at present anxious to be their friends; and all to find themselves at last sold by their champion, and obliged to accept much harder terms than those which Mr. Gladstone now offers to them.

I am glad to observe that a large number of the Irish clergy are alive to the fact that Mr. Gladstone is really their friend, and that disestablishment, by disassociating the Irish Church from the atrocities of its past history, will remove one of the most insurmountable barriers to its success.

'Religion' (said the Dean of Cashel, in his thoughtful paper at the Dublin Church Congress) 'is gradually, though slowly, disentangling itself from the political complications of the past. With the revival of spirituality arose a repugnance to the semi-warlike and political garb in which religion had, in times past, been forced to array itself. Honestly and earnestly have many of the clergy striven to make Protestantism religious, and not merely political. But it seemed as if in so doing they were sawing off the branch on which they stood—destroying one support without being able to substitute another. The political cohesion which joined men as Protestants had too often destroyed the spiritual affinity of Church membership. So much easier is it to destroy than to build up, that as yet the spiritual temple has not covered the site of the earthly fortress.'

The Dean of Cashel clearly sees that the only hope for his Church is in her disestablishment—in her doffing 'the semi-warlike and political garb' which she has hitherto worn. I remember the painful impression made on my mind the first time I worshipped in a parish church in Ireland by hearing the following petition in one of the prayers used:—

'We pray Thee to bless Thy servant the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, and grant that he may use *the sword* which our Sovereign Lady the Queen has committed into his hands with justice and mercy, according to Thy blessed will, for the protection of this people and *the true religion established amongst them.*'

It struck me that a religion which depended on *the sword* for its protection was in a decidedly false position, and that he should be doing a service to it who should sever it from that fatal connection. In truth, it is difficult, without an intimate acquaintance with Irish history and without having a personal knowledge of the country to realise the insolence towards the Roman Catholic population which their position as a garrison Church bred in the minds of the Protestants of Ireland. A pamphlet was published at the time of the Catholic Emancipation agitation, in which a number of letters were quoted from Protestant landlords to parish priests, as specimens of the guise in which Irish Protestantism presented itself to the Roman Catholics. The following are a few of those letters.

'Sir—I will draw my turf on Monday morning. Tell all the cars of the parish to be early at the bog, my own tenants in particular. Give this out at your chapel, and show your goodwill in your language.

'J. S.

'To Priest Daly.'

'Sir—Some of your damned rascals stole my pointer bitch; give her out in your chapel after mass, and I will expect her on Monday morning. Yours, &c.,

'P. D.'

'Sir—I will let out my stallion at 16*s.* 4*d.* a ———, as the enclosed will show. I will thank you to speak in his favour after mass to the people. Both you and they can show your gratitude to me and mine. Your Servant,

'W. F.'

'Sir—I hear you prevented Kitty Connor from kneeling at the front rail of your altar, and treated her with disrespect in my regard. I will have you to know that I will protect her, and level your mass-house if you or yours offend her. Mind this.

'F. C.'

Arthur Young tells stories more shocking even than this—stories which find their counterpart only on some of the worst plantations of the Southern States in the days of slavery. It was almost as much as a Roman Catholic's life was worth to remonstrate even against an outrage on his wife or daughter. And the clergy of the Established Church connived at all this, and often abetted it—nay, were sometimes the chief culprits. Even Lord Derby says,—

'I am perfectly willing to confess that in days long gone by, nothing could be more disreputable, and nothing more scandalous, than the character of the body of the Irish clergy. That was the case from the days of Spenser to those of Dean Swift, and even later.' *

The excellent men who at present minister in the Irish Church have inherited an evil legacy, and, innocent as they are themselves, they cannot hope to efface the memory of the past from the imagination

* Speech on the Suspensory Bill.

of the Irish people except by an act of some signal self-sacrifice. A voluntary relinquishment of State privileges would make an impression on the Irish which nothing else can make; and I am glad to observe that some of the Irish clergy themselves are taking this view of the matter. You cannot persuade the Irish that you mean to be just unless you disestablish the Irish Church. Any attempt to settle the Land question will fail if it do not *follow* the settlement of the Church question. Let the Irish clergy consider the words of one who has never been a party man, nor ever been accused of being led away by the impulse of the moment; but who, on the contrary, is praised by opponents and friends alike for his calm, judicial temper.

'It appears to me,' said Sir Roundell Palmer, in a debate on the Colonial Churches, May 6, 1850, 'that the only ground on which an Established Church can rest *in any country—the only one on which it is defensible, and can be permanently maintained—is that it is the embodiment of the true religion believed in by the mass of the people.* . . . It is because the people believed in the truth of the Church that it is now established. They do not believe in it *because* it is established. The Establishment of the Church, therefore, is the consequence, not the cause, of the people's belief in its truth.'

How much wiser is this sober language of truth than the incoherent rant about Ireland falling a prey to the Pope's supremacy as soon as the Protestant Church is disestablished! As if history did not prove that the Pope's supremacy is always weakest where

it is allied with temporal power, and strongest where it is encountered by physical weapons. Take Ireland and the late Kingdom of the Two Sicilies by way of example. In the former, what Mr. Disraeli styles dramatically 'the supreme purpose of one power' has held the Irish race in the hollow of its hand from the reign of Queen Elizabeth to the reign of Queen Victoria; in the latter, where the Church of Rome had all the resources of the State on its side, the supremacy of the Pope is below zero.

And now, before concluding this long letter, let me say one word on the subject of the secularisation of ecclesiastical property; for I think there is some danger of pushing the argument against secularisation to an extreme.

What is meant by secularisation? Etymologically, I suppose, the word means the application of Church property to some of the purposes or ends of this life. But is such disposition of ecclesiastical property to be condemned under all circumstances, and without exception? Surely no one would maintain such a proposition. Can we draw a line, and say that all that is on the one side of it is entirely of this world, and that all on the other side belongs to the spiritual world? On the contrary, has not Christianity taught us that the Christian's life in this world and the next is one—a life begun here and continued there? No doubt it is the Christian's duty to sacrifice his temporal interests whenever they interfere with his spiritual welfare; but it is no less true that our Blessed Lord, who enforced this duty by precept, and illustrated it

by His example, displayed in His own practice a tender solicitude for the well-being of man's life even in this world. He went up and down the earth as the physician of the bodies no less than of the souls of men: He 'had compassion on the multitude,' and put forth His power to satisfy their bodily as well as their spiritual hunger. And if there was one thing which He condemned with special severity, it was the notion that a gift laid on the altar of God became holy irrespective of the motive which inspired the offering, or the use to which it was applied.

And this, too, as far as I know, is the view which the Church has always taken of the matter. She has never hesitated to apply strictly ecclesiastical property to purposes purely secular when the occasion seemed worthy of such a sacrifice. The most sacred of all Church property, the sacred vessels of the altar, have been sold before now for the relief of the poor and for the ransom of Christian captives. Nothing, too, is more notorious than the fact that the Church has over and over again, not only during the middle ages, but in much more recent times, contributed from her property towards the equipment and maintenance of armies in a cause which she believed to be just. Then, again, what can be more secular than public roads and bridges? Yet the construction and repair of these were frequently charged on ecclesiastical property.

The Church, therefore, does not appear to have laid down any rule on the subject. So that if the State should consider it right to apply any funds,

which it may abstract from the Irish Establishment, to any purpose which has in view the amelioration of the temporal condition of the people of Ireland, I do not know any principle of Christian ethics which would forbid it.

And now let me conclude with one reflection. It has been the besetting sin of the Church of England since the Reformation to present herself to the nation at large as the Church of a party rather than of the nation. The clergy have been ever ready to fight the battle of one party in the State, and have unfortunately opposed nearly every measure of beneficence and justice which the mass of the people regard with gratitude. What has been the consequence? Let the serried ranks of Dissent answer. I have some experience of the working classes, and I know that the opposition of our clergy to Reform generally, the fact that their influence is always cast in the scale of the Tory party, has done more than anything to alienate the affections and the confidence of the working classes. At the same time, it has been a matter of life and death with the Liberal party to weaken the Church, because the Church has always been their most formidable opponent. It was with great pleasure, therefore, that I read Archdeacon Denison's avowal the other day at the Church Congress, that but a fraction of the English clergy have signed the petition against the disestablishment of the Irish Church.

The Liberal party has for the first time for many years a leader who is entitled to command the con-

fidence of English Churchmen, and the most distinguished members of the party seem disposed to give the Church fair play; and, for my part, I ask no more; for, with fair play, I believe that the Church can carry all before her.

At this juncture, therefore, it would be a serious calamity if the Church of England were to leave the sanctuary in order to fight the battle of political injustice in Ireland. I remember how of old the ark of God was safe till it emerged from the sanctuary of Shiloh and engaged in the warfare of worldly politics. Then, indeed, it was taken by its foes. But the moment it was bereft again of carnal weapons, and fell back on its own inherent strength, immediately its supernatural might began to display itself, and smote to the ground the false god of its captors. Even the brute beasts did homage to its majesty, and, guided by a preternatural instinct, carried it back to its home, 'lowing as they went.'

Of course, clergymen have their political feelings, and it would be unjust as well as unreasonable to find fault with them for giving expression to those feelings in a legitimate manner. But I deprecate the appearance of my brethren, be they Liberal or Tory, on the public platforms of a political contest. Our place is not there at any time; still less now, when the question in debate has reference to our own temporal interests and privileges.

I trust most sincerely that the Irish Church will be disestablished. I wish this for the sake of the Irish Church itself; for the sake of the Church of England,

which is discredited by its connection with an indefensible institution; and above all, I wish it for the sake of Ireland, so cruelly wronged by England, and now looking over the sea towards the Parliament of England with a feeling of joyous hope, to which it has been so long a stranger. I am told by an Irish gentleman, who knows his country well, that the success of Mr. Gladstone's Resolutions in the House of Commons has had a truly magical effect in Ireland. At this moment, he says, Fenianism would have no chance in Ireland, for the people are really beginning to believe in the justice of England, and are waiting anxiously for the decision of the new Parliament. Let this opportunity of conciliating Ireland be allowed to pass away, and who can tell if England will have another? Everything is favourable to a policy of peace just now. Fenianism is suppressed, and England can do justice as an act of grace, and not at the dictation of fear. The bane of all our concessions to Ireland has been that they were made too late. They were extorted from our fear, not yielded by our sense of justice. This, indeed, is the warning preached to us by all revolutions. Some reform is demanded today, and refused. Then the tide sweeps on and beleaguers a position still more advanced; the defenders then hurriedly concede the demand of yesterday; but it is too late. And so it goes on till all is lost. I sincerely trust and believe that Ireland is to experience for the first time the benefits of a more rational as well as a more just policy.

With many apologies for giving you the trouble of reading so long a letter,

I am, dear Colonel Greville-Nugent,

Yours very faithfully,

MALCOLM MACCOLL.

Oct. 7, 1868.

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